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THE QUEEN'S MAN.

A ROMANCE OF THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

CHAPTER X.

ANTONIO was not unaccustomed to these sudden calls from Lady Marlowe. Ever since the day when he first bent his knee before her in her cabinet at Swanlea, it had been his place to amuse and interest her whenever her impatient human nature suddenly dropped its usual masks and restraints. He had always come to her with a perfect confidence of being acceptable; the stern handsome face softened, the hard eyes swam in dreams, the whole creature became sweet and lazy, with this lithe, beautiful, mysterious animal at her feet.

To-day there was a touch of anxiety in the graceful haste with which he ran to her; perhaps because he was aware of the success which had crowned his plan of throwing Alice Tilney in young Richard's way, a success hardly likely to please Richard's mother; perhaps because of something, a look, a mocking touch, in the servant's manner who called him.

She received him with a smile. He knelt on her footstool; she took his face in her two hands, a favourite trick of hers. Then a dangerous gleam came into her eyes, and he felt that her long nails were pricking his cheeks.

"Liar—traitor—villain!" she said. "Where is my Lord Marlowe?"

The young man's heart stood still.

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Flushing and paling, he knew for the first time what it was to be afraid of a woman. Thoughts rushed through his brain. He had been betrayed, and by whom? Could it be by Alice? It must be; who else at Ruddiford knew the truth? "I will punish her," he thought. "She thinks I love her, false girl! This is a pretty use to make of my trust in her. She must have told the Popinjay."

He was thinking under the fierce gaze of eyes that sought to read his soul. But another moment told him that the secret was still in his own hands.

"Where is he, Antonio?" said Lady Marlowe, now speaking less furiously. "I believe that you know the truth, if any one does. You demon in shape of a pretty boy, I believe you fancied his Lordship in your way, and by some wicked means, perhaps with those long fingers, you put him out of it. You murdered him! Where did you bury him? I will see his grave. But, miserable, did you fancy that the prize he coveted would be for you, you with your face like a god of the Greeks, born in some Italian gutter, and left there for an Englishman to pick up and bring to his unhappy family?"

Isabel laughed as she spoke, and again her nails made sharp dents in Antonio's smooth cheeks. He hardly noticed the pain, with such horrified

wonder did he listen to her words. How could this woman know what not a living creature knew, — the height of his ambition, the depth of his scheming, the passion which he took such pains to disguise, and which, long smouldering, had leapt up like a devouring flame when he saw the sudden love between Lord Marlowe and Margaret, his lady, his adored? Alice could not have betrayed him here, for she suspected nothing. He had made love all the more hotly to her, foolish girl, that no one at Ruddiford or King's Hall might dream of the real object of his life. He knew, and it was a slight satisfaction, that Mistress Meg guessed a little what was passing, and despised them both. Sometimes he hated Meg as much as he loved her. "Ah, some day, my lovely lady, some day!" he would say to himself half threateningly; but how or when that day and its triumph were to be reached he did not know. It must suffice for him, by secret arts, to gather the threads of Margaret's life in his hands, to stop her marrying by fair means or foul, to keep his influence with Sir William and trust to some bold stroke in the confusion that might follow his death. For the old man grew feebler every day, and could not live long; and Antonio knew well that a mere suspicion of his designs in Sir William's mind, and Ruddiford would see the faithful secretary, the necessary youth, no more.

But how had his secret been revealed to Lady Marlowe? Could Meg herself have guessed it? Could his eyes have betrayed him? Could that proud silence have hidden a resentment which had found words in talk with her Ladyship? The very thought seemed absurd to one who had known Meg from a child, worshipping the very stateliness which protected her from his familiarity.

However, there was no time for these questions now. He was kneeling at the feet of a perfectly unscrupulous woman, who had, as he guessed, more than one cause of anger against him. To her he had pretended that he loved no one, that in truth, till her Ladyship deigned to give him a lesson or two, he hardly knew what love was. This supposed state of things had amused her considerably. Without an after-thought she had played with her humble toy, and now, when some secret spring started up and hurt her a little, she was very naturally annoyed.

She let his face go, and he was glad, for the task of meeting her eyes boldly was a tiresome one. She slipped her right hand down to her broad belt, stiff with silver and jewels, and brought it back armed with a small fine dagger. Her fierce gaze still fixed upon him, though her mouth smiled, she held this before his face. Antonio did not quail.

"Mercy, Madam!" he said in his softest tones. "But at the worst, I too wear a poniard—your ladyship's gift!"

It was true. Not the rich chain only had passed to Antonio from the coffers of Swanlea. The dagger he wore, its hilt set with precious stones, was an object of rather mocking envy to Ruddiford. Isabel's smile broadened.

"Brave boy," she said, "to stab a woman! a fitting close to your gay adventures. But mine, look you, is poisoned. The very littlest wound with mine,—before you have time to draw yours—Master Antonio turns green and dies. Pah! a vile death!"

She held the point near his throat. He made no movement but implored her with his eyes, and England at that day held none more eloquent. She laughed, and sheathed her little weapon, then gave him her hand, and he held it to his lips.

"Well, well, his master's daughter! 'tis a pretty ambition," she said. "Youth will to youth,—but you are a sweet liar, Antonio."

He thought of denying; but after all, it was useless. His soft eyes drooped as he said, "If it were so, your Ladyship might think it a matter for pity."

She was silent for a few instants before she said roughly: "Then, madman, how was it you did your best to bring about the failure of Lord Marlowe's embassy? 'Twas you, as I hear, who turned the asking for his brother into asking for himself. That seemed a strange way to gain your ends, whatever they were."

Antonio stared. "There is nothing hidden from your Ladyship. Who then told you this tale?"

"No less a person than your old master, villain."

"Ah, Madam, the Devil himself put the words into my mouth. I did but whisper,—like a mocking echo in the room, I remember well—and I thought of no consequences. Verily to me, a man in despair, Madam, one Marlowe seemed as dreadful as another. If your Ladyship knows my secret, I cannot tell how, you may understand that such a man throws a ball no matter where,—he stops not to think—and it may rebound within reach of his hand, Madam. Then, then, to dash it another way! Yes, the ball of fate,—he will end by flinging it along the path he means to follow."

"Enough of your parables," said Isabel. "Remember, such a man, especially if he lie to his friends, and betray them who trust him, may find his path end in death, or punishment worse than death. Remember that, Antonio."

She watched his face. In spite of its beauty, the eyes and mouth had always a touch of cunning. Now

that he found himself in a difficult place, both had hardened into a strong resolution she had never seen in him before. She noticed for the first time that the delicately made youth had a square brow and a chin of iron.

"I must kill him, or know all his secrets and bind him by interest to me," she said to herself; then she murmured just above her breath: "And so, to carry out your parable, the ball did rebound within reach of your hand, and you threw it—where? Where is my Lord Marlowe, Antonio?"

"Madam, I cannot," he began, stammering a little.

"Nay, good youth, you can, and you will," said she. "Of the tale I have been told, how much is true? Did his Lordship leave the castle alone, setting out over the moors, leaving a message for his men to follow him? That they did follow him, I know, to their undoing. But where is he? With Queen Margaret, or in some dungeon under our feet, or stark and dead upon the fells? Understand, I must know."

"But why,—why, Madam—am I my Lord Marlowe's keeper?" There was an agitation in Antonio's voice and eyes which told Isabel, in spite of his effort at candid speech, that she was on the right track. "What reason have you," he cried, "to doubt the story that has been told? Who has taught you these suspicions?"

"Enough, dear liar; it is the truth I want this time. I am searching for my stepson, and I mean to find him, or to know his fate. If I were to say to you, bring him to me, I believe that you could do it. Unless indeed he is dead."

Antonio shook his head slowly. "Your Ladyship over-rates my power."

"Ah, possibly; but I do not over-

rate my own. I whistle, and four strong men are with me. You know them, the men of my own guard. They tie you up to a beam in the guard-room, and there they question you a little more sharply than I do here,—so sharply, indeed, that you come back to me with your beauty spoiled for ever and a day. I shall not regret it; 'twill be no more loss to me than to any other of your supposed friends. By Our Lady, I'm weary of you, and I see that no one loves you, except the foolish old Knight your master, and he is ready enough to tell tales of you. No," as he was hastily rising; "kneel where you are, or I whistle, Antonio. Consider, now,"—for he was once more motionless—"now that I know your secrets, are not you wiser to work with me than against me, or even for your own hand? Nameless, penniless, depending for your future on the caprice of a country knight who takes the wrong side in the nation's quarrel, are not you wiser to throw in your lot with me? You pretended at Swanlea that you were my servant; now be my servant in reality, and I will answer for your future. 'Tis an easy choice that I offer you,—my service, body and soul,—or the question, Antonio."

All this time she held him with her eyes, and her left hand lay on his right shoulder, while the right, in the folds of her gown, grasped the little deadly weapon which would defend her from any desperate spring of her prey. Antonio's words came home to him: "My Lady Marlowe is not a woman to be played with."

It was no use, at this point, rack-ing his brains to find out how she came to suspect him of knowing so much; that she had guessed all his secrets without any human help, was more than he could believe, unless the stories of witchcraft were true.

With rage in his heart he told himself that the woman spoke truth throughout; no one at Ruddiford loved him, even the old master betrayed and contemned him,—no one but Alice; and little as he really cared for her, he had a pang of jealousy at having given her over to Dick Marlowe's boyish love-making,—another cause of wrath to my Lady, if she had only known. However, she was right; he was in her power, and the secret must out, no matter what the consequences. He felt fairly sure that she did not love her stepson; he knew that her intentions as to Dick's marriage remained the same. It is true that his little plot to turn Dick against it by Alice's means seemed futile enough in her terrible presence. Other, stronger means would be necessary to carry out his resolve that Margaret Roden should marry neither Marlowe. But he believed in his own star. At this moment it was a matter of saving his own soft skin, which he loved, after all, better than anything else in the world. And whatever her Ladyship might do with the lost man, the Queen's man, he was sure that she would not marry him to Margaret.

Still, Lord Marlowe was her stepson, the head of her House, and men had died cruel deaths for less crimes than Antonio's. He thought of throwing the chief blame on Jasper Tilney; but it seemed useless. Alice, the only witness, might turn against him then, for she loved her wild brother. No, the boldest plan was the safest. He put his hands together like a vassal doing homage, and Isabel took them between her own, stooping eagerly towards him.

"First," he said, "your promise of forgiveness. In a manner the thing was for your service. He would have married her."

"On all I hold sacred," she answered him,—perhaps it was saying little—"I swear that you shall not suffer from me for anything you have done."

She suspected him, then, of more than knowledge. Well, she was right. Kneeling there at her feet, he told her all, and with keen instinct perceived that the news of Lord Marlowe's captivity, in so near a prison as King's Hall, under so slight a guard, compared with the power she would bring to release him, as that of Jasper Tilney, was less welcome to her Ladyship than the news of his death would have been.

She sat upright in her high chair with knitted brows, thinking deeply, her dark eyes staring into space over Antonio's head.

"This Tilney must be a poor-spirited creature," she said. "What does he think to gain by keeping my Lord shut up in his house? Mistress Margaret's favour?"

"He means to gain my Lord's promise to renounce the marriage, and then to send him off on his best horse to join the Queen. One would think," Antonio murmured, "that with such a condition the way of escape was easy. A man might be dispensed from such an oath—"

"Ay, *one* would think," mocked Isabel, "*one* born in the gutter. Come, your Tilney is a gentleman and knows the man he deals with, a fool, but a perfect knight. Well, well, thy news is none so good, Antonio. I would my Lord were further away. Why, a moment's freak, and this mad free-booting fellow may release him, if it were but to annoy me and spoil the wedding with Richard—other plans, too—other and greater. Tell me, how many are there in Ruddiford who know this story?"

"None,—nay, one person only." Antonio felt suddenly sure that his own safety depended on his telling the exact truth, and was not unwilling that Alice should share his danger. As to Richard, she had done her duty there; the Popinjay was caught, and would not give up his fancy in a moment. Any little difficulty, indeed, would only add fuel to the fire, and Alice would never dare betray her brother and Antonio. "Mistress Alice Tilney, his sister, Mistress Margaret's companion and friend."

"What, a chattering girl? And she has kept such a secret from her friend? For whose sake?"

Half the truth must suffice here. "For her brother's sake, Madam; she loves him truly."

"But the risk is too great; it must cease," said Lady Marlowe. "A chattering girl, ever with Margaret—ha! Alice Tilney, a pink and white poppet with yellow hair; I have seen her. Ha, she leaves her friend, her mistress, to play with silks and old men, while her fair locks are tumbling on a young man's shoulder. I saw them on the rampart even now. My son, forsooth, and Mistress Alice Tilney! I thought 'twas some wardrobe maid, or even a damsel from the kitchen. Boys play these foolish pranks; not all are so discreet as thou, my pretty Antonio. But a Tilney,—well born, you say?—that is a serious matter. Dick shall hear my will. The woman must leave the castle. Go, fetch her to me instantly; and not a word to her of what you have told me. I am ignorant, remember. I have reason enough, God knows—this girl may tell Margaret,—she has bewitched Richard,—enough! Go!"

A few minutes later, and Lady Marlowe in grave and gentle mood received the girl with whom her son

had dared to entangle himself. Alice feared her too much, in spite of this gentleness, to receive her admonitions with anything but meekness. In heart she was defiant enough. It no longer seemed an impossible thing that Richard Marlowe should marry her. He had sworn that he would. My Lady was plain-spoken, but she was civil, and she treated Alice according to her birth; the girl was neither offended nor unreasonably hurt. She wished that the door would open, that her new lover in his gay attire, with the merry smile which was beginning to seem so much more attractive than Antonio's mysterious looks and ways, would come in and claim her at this happy moment. But no Popinjay came.

Lady Marlowe spoke of discretion, of the fitness of things, of the rash affections of young men, of the modesty proper to maidens. She wished the girl a good husband, but charged her to remember that Master Marlowe was bound in honour elsewhere. She told her that Sir William would that very evening, on her demand, provide an escort for Mistress Tilney to her home at King's Hall.

Alice flushed all over her pretty face, which had been pale. "King's Hall is scarce a fit place for me, Madam," she murmured. "My parents are dead, my brother—"

"Your brother must make it a fit place," said Lady Marlowe. "If you are old enough to dream of marriage, you are old enough to keep your brother's house. Find some old woman to be with you. Plainly, Mistress Alice, so long as I and my son remain here, you do not. But I will not send you without a word to your brother from me. Wait where you are."

She turned to the table, drew forward her writing-box, and presently,

after a few minutes of hurried scratching, finished a note which she then carefully sealed, writing on the outside, *On Master Tilney's private business, to be opened by him alone.* "Take that," she said, "and give it to your brother"; and then she dismissed Alice, who curtsied low and fled in a state of bewilderment.

Antonio, pale and bright-eyed, was waiting in the gallery. He caught her as she passed. "Alice, Alice! No such hurry! What said she to you, sweet?"

Alice shook off his hand impatiently. "Cannot you guess?" she said. "She is driving me from Ruddiford. If I dared, I would go straight to Sir William. But *she*, Antonio!"

"As well offend the fiercest wolf in the forest," he whispered. "Alas, my pretty Alice, you must go. What paper have you there, child?"

"A letter that she gave me for Jasper. Ah, so gentle, she was, but very angry! Was it you, *you*, who told her?"

"Told her what?" Antonio was startled.

"About Master Marlowe, — and me."

"I? no," he cried, relieved. "She saw you from a window, saw you together on the rampart, foolish girl. You might be prudent, if he is not. But after all, 'tis going a little far, Alice."

"Back, Antonio," she said, coldly, as he tried to draw her close and kiss her, as of old. "You may scoff and call him the Popinjay; he is a better man than you, and not only because he is noble."

She slipped from him and darted away into the gathering twilight. He looked after her with an evil smile on his lips. "Trust a woman!" he muttered. "My Lady should watch you, sweet Mistress Alice. As for me, I stand alone; I care not."

CHAPTER XI.

HIGH up in Margaret's tower, she and Alice Tilney slept in the same room. The young girls who waited on her and worked under her orders slept in the room adjoining; and Dame Kate, guardian of all, had her little cell on the staircase, a flight below. The old nurse was accustomed herself to attend on her lady's dressing and undressing; but in these latter days housekeeping matters often detained her in the kitchen regions till late at night, keeping order as best she could in the confusion of many guests and strange servants. Therefore Alice had taken her place to a certain extent, waiting on Meg the more carefully because of the barrier that had risen between them, letting her hands atone for the sins, if they were such, of her heart and mind.

On this evening Alice did not appear at her usual time. It was bedtime, and Meg was tired. She went up the winding stairs to her room, undressed and lay down after her evening prayers, in which she thanked God for giving her a kind mother in my Lady Marlowe. Certainly, for many weeks, she had not lain down to sleep with so comforted a feeling. At the same time, she was resolved to stay awake till Alice came, for, though too generous and too proud to call her to account, she was certainly angry with her. What kind of manners were these, to be wandering about the castle till late at night, when her duty was here, in this room? Again there came the tormenting unworthy suspicion of some secret understanding between Alice and Antonio; yet Mistress Meg was far from placing these two on a level in her thoughts. She cared for Alice, more than Alice knew; while for the last few weeks she had almost hated Antonio.

It was a brilliant February night;

not cold, with a smell of spring in the air, a deceiving promise that winter was over and gone. The moon was high in a cloudless air, and the pale light flooded the windows of Meg's tower and lay in long pools on the floor. It even reached the little silk-curtained bed, and kissed the girl's hands, flung out on the counterpane.

"I will not sleep," she thought. "I will lie awake till Alice comes. To-morrow I shall see my Lady again, and we will talk more. I am,—I am,—her true and loving—"

The heavy lids fell, and Meg was asleep, sound asleep without a dream. The moonlight crept slowly higher, and touched her eyelashes. Alice Tilney, wrapped for a journey, her travelling-hood drawn round her face, came and stood between the bed and the window.

"Mercy, the moon will blind her!" she said to herself, and touched the curtain to draw it forward.

The movement woke Meg. She opened her eyes and sat up suddenly. Before she could speak, the other girl had thrown herself on her knees by the bed.

"Farewell, sweet one! I must go," she said. "They will fetch me,—but they forget that I am yours, Meg. I have deceived you often enough,—ah, do not look at me so—but in this matter I will be true to you, Meg, my sister."

"What are you saying, Alice?" murmured the sleepy girl, bewildered. "And where are you going,—and without my knowledge? Take off that hood, I say, and go to your bed. Our Lady help us, it must be midnight!"

"It is but ten," Alice said, her voice trembling a little with excitement or fear. "I am to leave you, Meg, my sweet,—not your order, but my Lady Marlowe's. She will not have me here; and she has said a

word to Sir William,—he cannot deny her,—he is angry with me, too,—and they are sending me home this very night with an escort to King's Hall."

By this time Meg had started from her bed, and stood with bare feet on the floor, her long locks like a cloak of ruddy brown, falling to shoulders and waist, her face pale, her eyes wide and wondering in the moonlight. "But why,—why will not she have you here? I will go to her and tell her you are mine. Alice, why, Alice, my grandfather knows King's Hall is no fit place for you."

"Neither, it seems, is Ruddiford Castle,—for its own sake, not mine. Listen, Meg." She took Margaret's hands in hers, and drew her face near. She had forgotten any coldness, any rightful displeasure that her friend might feel. White with the new passion that now possessed her, growing in strength every minute, full of wild suspicions of Antonio, whom she had loved, and of rage against Lady Marlowe, whom she hated for more reasons than one, the resolution had seized her to spoil the game they were playing, to let Margaret know all that she knew. "Do not go to my Lady; even you will not move her," she said.

"What have you done to displease her?"

Meg now spoke a little coldly. Alice laughed. "They take Richard Marlowe for a boy," she said; "they call him the Popinjay. But he is a man in heart and courage, and if I chose to appeal to him this night, Meg, he would strike a blow before he would part with me. There, is that enough? I can tell you no more; but if he cares for me as he says, he may follow me to King's Hall. Let him be true to me, and I will marry no other man. Ah, English blood tells! Do not look on me as her Ladyship did, Margaret.

We Tilneys bear a name as old as any, and it is not because of his birth that my poor Jasper—but see you"—she laughed awkwardly—"this unwelcome suitor of yours, this Dick Marlowe, you need not fear him, Meg."

"I do not," Margaret answered her; "I never did. His nature is written on his face. But oh, Alice, dare you trust the love of a boy? And—if my Lady is angry—"

"He is my Lady's son, and has a will of his own," Alice said.

For a moment they looked at each other. The bright colour had risen in both faces. Alice started at some distant sound, and was going to speak, when Meg, with a sudden movement, flung her arms round her and kissed her lips with the old loving embrace of months and years ago, of the old time when their friendship had first begun. Alice threw back her hood, and wrapped half her cloak round Meg; they sat down on the edge of the bed, the dark and fair curls mingling. Meg rejoiced, though ready to reproach herself—was it loyal to my Lady? But a certain gladness was irresistible. Alice did not know that the words, "I thought it was Antonio," lay beneath her friend's smile.

Two years in age had always made a certain difference between them. If Margaret's position was superior, Alice had an experience of the world and men of which Margaret was perfectly innocent. She was not like Alice, by nature a coquette. Men were nothing to her, till the sudden coming of Harry Marlowe taught her what love and life meant, only to leave her, as it seemed, to death and desolation. Alice had watched her with real pity, and only her loyalty to Jasper and Antonio had made the secret safe, while, as she told Antonio, she saw Meg's heart breaking from day to day.

"But now, it is not I who have betrayed Jasper," she said to herself. "And I will not have my Lord die by treachery, and she of grief, while I can save them. Sweet baby," she murmured; and as a mother might have done she drew Meg's head to her breast and kissed her soft hair: then she whispered suddenly, "He lives, — your Harry lives! What will you give me for the secret now?"

Meg drew herself instantly upright, shook back her hair, and met Alice's laughing eyes with a sudden flame in her own which startled the lighter nature. "I knew that my Lord was alive," she said. "If you know where he is, tell me; and tell me too what wickedness has kept him from us so long."

"He is at King's Hall," Alice answered. "He has been a prisoner there since Jasper and his men took him on Christmas morning, ten minutes after he parted from you."

Meg rose to her feet, once more as white as death. "And you knew it?" she said.

There was such reproach in the words that Alice trembled and looked down. "What reason had I to love my Lord Marlowe?" she said, very low.

"But you say you love me!"

"I do, Meg, and that is why I have told you now."

"Jasper did it? Why?"

"For love of you; and he is my brother."

Meg gazed upon her as if turned to stone. The words, "Did Antonio know?" were on her lips, but she did not say them. She knew that Antonio knew. It seemed to her that out of the mists of uncertainty she was plunging into dark clouds of evil, though beyond these again the sun was shining with a brilliancy almost unimaginable. She could not

yet understand what Alice had told her.

"A prisoner—at King's Hall?" she repeated. "If Jasper does not set him free, I shall hate him to my dying day. But he must, he shall; my grandfather will see to that, and my Lady his mother. Tell your Jasper that his miserable conspiracy has failed, and that I scorn him from the depth of my soul. Has he treated him well?"

"How should I know? Is this your gratitude?" Alice's eyes were full of tears.

Meg turned away impatiently. "I will go with you. Where is my gown?"

"No, Meg, that you cannot do. But,—though you are hard to me—I promise you news of him. And if you choose to write a message, I will bear it faithfully. But haste, my dear; even now they are coming to call me."

Meg flew to her writing-box, a seldom-used treasure, the gift of her grandfather, which stood on a great oak chest in her room. While she hastily lighted a taper, pulled out her materials and stooped to write with trembling fingers, Alice watched her in silence; but her hand dived into the pocket of her gown, and she drew out, unseen by Meg, a small piece of paper, a note of which the seal was already broken,—for this was a trust to which Alice had not been true.

Meg's back being turned to her, she held this small letter up to the light and read it again. It was meant for her brother, and she had mistrusted it, and the woman who had written it. The reading of this treacherous letter had decided her to set Meg's heart at ease. No, Jasper should never see it. He would not, she hoped, have acted upon it; yet it were best he should not feel his prisoner too much at his mercy.

Lady Marlowe had written this to her stepson's rival and jailer: *He who stands in your way stands also in that of others. Why spare him?* Alice crushed the cruel words in her hands, and thought of the fire not yet out in the lower room. She might have kept them as a witness against Lady Marlowe, but the woman was Dick's mother, strange as it seemed. She would neither let her be a murderer, nor have her accused of such an intention. The words should burn.

Even now she heard the distant tramp of heavy boots upon the stones, and she pulled up her hood and wrapped her cloak round her, saying softly, "Haste, Meg, haste!"

Meg's letter was not long. *Thank God, my lord, my love, that you still live. Your Meg loves you ever. She waits for you.* "Give it to him yourself, Alice," she said. "And tell Jasper, if he does not set him free to-morrow morning, every man-at-arms in Ruddiford will be at his gates ere noon. Ah, my Lady does not know!"

The heavy feet were on the stairs now, and there was a loud knocking at the lower door.

"Is Mistress Tilney within?" shouted a hoarse voice. "The litter and the men are ready."

Alice started, hesitated a moment. "I have not told her," she said. "'Tis Black Andrew. Sir William ordered him to take men and guard me home. Farewell, sweetheart! Keep you brave and happy! I am gone. Back to your pillows, Meg, till the morning."

The door opened and shut. "I am here, Andrew," cried the girl. But as she hurried down the winding stairs, she turned into the room where the embroidery frames stood, and where a few red embers smouldered still upon the hearth. Into the

middle of these she dropped Lady Marlowe's letter to Jasper, waited an instant to see it flame, and rushed down to her grumbling escort.

On the way she met Dame Kate, climbing slowly to her bed.

"Here's a pretty coil," said the old woman. "Saints defend us, and what are our maidens coming to!"

Such-like phrases pelted Alice hard, for indeed she and her precious brother were never favourites with the old nurse. But she could not stop to listen now, to quarrel with Dame Kate or defend herself. Without a word she fled past her, and great scandals as to Mistress Tilney and Master Marlowe were spread, uncontradicted, in Ruddiford.

The Popinjay slept in peace that night, dreamed of his pretty love, and woke smiling. But the latest gossip of the castle was not long in reaching him. His dressing, a matter of deep interest and delight, was quite spoilt by the news his servant gave him, that Mistress Alice Tilney had been sent to her home, the night before, with little notice and without any farewells, closed up in a horse-litter and guarded by half-a-dozen of Sir William's men with Black Andrew to lead them. They had come back in the small hours of the morning, and they said 'twas a pity so fine a young lady had not a better home to go to, for King's Hall was a bear-garden for roughness and wickedness, a meeting-place for the wildest men in the country, and if Master Tilney was the best of his Fellowship, as folks reported, that was not saying much for him. Even Black Andrew wondered at his old master's orders, but could only obey them.

"The silly old Knight! What maggot has he got in his foolish head now?" cried Richard in consternation. "Nay, booby, the blue gown. I'll go mourning to-day; I've no heart for

red or yellow. Ha, I'll soon tell his worship what I think of him! Why, she's the lady I mean to marry,—and you may say I told you so. Enough, —there,—I'll go first and complain to my Lady."

The man looked after him, grinning, as he stalked out of the room. Everybody knew it was at Lady Marlowe's request that Mistress Tilney had been sent away: everybody knew that her Ladyship intended this son of hers for the young heiress of Ruddiford; and if everybody was aware of Mistress Margaret's passionate fancy and anxious grief for the mad Lord, as well as of Master Richard's violent flirtation with Mistress Tilney (whose intimacy with Antonio the secretary was not unknown), everybody was naturally too wise to imagine that any of these weaknesses would incline the scales of fate one way or the other. As Sir Thomas Pye pointed out sorrowfully to Timothy and Simon, the Baroness Marlowe ruled the roost. Contrary to the opinion of his three most faithful friends, Sir William had chosen to entrust her with deciding the fate of Ruddiford, and of Margaret. With that act of his the troubles began. And it seemed the more unnecessary, now that the cause of Lancashire was triumphing in the south. Among King Henry's faithful followers a husband might have been found for Meg, a future master for Ruddiford, whose brain was not unsteady like Lord Marlowe's, and in whose family there was no suspicion of that leaning to York which seemed to explain the mysterious ways of my Lady Isabel.

They of Isabel's household wondered sometimes if she ever slept. Morning and night she was always the same, her wits never clouded, her humour seldom changing. Like more famous women, she might order a man to be hanged and a dinner to

be cooked without any difference of tone. When most angry she seldom lost her self-command, and could mock where others raged.

Young Richard came to her that morning, flushed and furious, yet half dazed from his long night's rest, the rest of a lazy animal that did nothing but play. She might have been sitting in council all night long, preparing to receive him. She laughed at his indignation, when she at once and frankly confessed that the banishment of Alice Tilney was her doing, that Sir William had consented at her request. Did she know, Richard stammered, that Mistress Tilney's brother was a large land-owner with a fine house and following of his own, and that there were few older names in the Midlands?

"I know it well, Dick," she answered, smiling. "And I grant you the girl is pretty and fairly mannered. Her height measures well with yours. Her head lies well on your shoulder. Your hair is the reddest, but hers is a pleasant colour, and that green velvet coat of yours—yes, I saw you on the ramparts yesterday," she went on with a sudden change of tone; "and since she is well-born, and you might therefore be seized with some dream of marrying her, I decided to send her away from the castle."

Richard's red cheeks became even deeper in tone. He drew himself up with an air of dignity.

"Not only, Madam, do I dream of marrying her; I will and shall marry her, and no other woman."

"You have a virtuous intention," said Lady Marlowe. "Law and religion, it is true, only allow you one wife. If you might have two, matters could be arranged to please you. As it is, your one wife will not be Alice Tilney, but Margaret Roden."

Dick stamped his feet on the floor.

"I swear by all that's holy," he cried, "I will not marry Margaret Roden. Even if she were not promised to Harry—and why should I take his leavings?—I don't like her, I could never love her as I love my sweet Alice. She is cold, she frightens a man, she looks away, while Alice smiles in your face and draws you on with those blue eyes of hers. No she's Harry's fancy, let him have her! I tell you, Margaret Roden is not the wife for me!"

He shouted aloud in his excitement. His mother held up her hand to check him, to reason with the wild boy; she was very pale, and her eyes were shining dangerously. "Your will against mine, Dick," she murmured, and then, louder, "I believe that our poor Harry is dead."

She was about to say more, but there was a shaking in the curtain that covered the door, and both her attention and Dick's were instantly caught by it. The latch was raised slowly, the curtain pushed back, and Margaret stepped lightly into the room, bowed her head towards Richard with a smile that startled him, made her reverence to Isabel, and came close to her.

The young girl looked radiantly beautiful. A different creature was this from the Margaret Roden they had hitherto seen. Even the day before, when she had drawn so near to Lady Marlowe, her lovely youth had been spoilt and clouded by sadness. Isabel had guessed then what she might be in brighter days, but now even she, with her clear sight, was astonished. A creature of the dawn, flushed with love and joy, Meg came to bring her triumphal news to Lord Marlowe's nearest ones.

"I have good tidings," she said, and kneeling, laid her hands on Isabel's. "My Lord Marlowe lives, —he is well, I hope—he is near—

this very day, if my message does not fail, he will be with us. But if he does not come, we will send; my grandfather's men will quickly have him out of his prison."

She knelt, gazing into Lady Marlowe's face. Single-minded as she was, it would have needed thicker perceptions to fail to see what she did see,—a flash of wrathful terror instantly veiled by a smile.

"Indeed, sweet Meg," her Ladyship murmured. "And where, then,—but who gave you this wonderful news?"

"What? Brother Harry safe and well?" Dick's voice was chiming in on the other side, boyish and hearty, his own grievance forgotten for the moment. "Do you hear, Madam? Does that arrange matters?" He broke into sudden laughter.

Neither Isabel nor Margaret seemed to hear him.

Before either could speak again, a sudden clamour and tumult in the castle court broke upon their ears and strangely claimed their attention. Surely it was the voice of the old man, Sir William Roden. Loud but trembling, he was making some announcement from the steps of the hall — "Victory — the King — the Queen"—these words reached them, and then instantly the men-at-arms began to shout and the trumpeters to blow. And then, over all the noise and martial music, in the pale sunshine of that February morning, breaking and falling in silvery clangour above castle and town, the church bells burst into a peal of joy; the very air seemed to rock with them,—"Victory! victory!"

Unconscious of herself, Margaret knelt on, with parted lips watching the change in the face of her whose loving daughter she had promised to be. At first Lady Marlowe seemed turned to stone; then a look of evil fury transformed her. Suddenly

rising, pushing the girl away, with an angry cry of, "What is this?" she was going hastily to the window, when the door opened and Antonio appeared. He seemed to see no one but her as he bowed low and said: "Madam, Sir William Roden has sent me to announce to your Ladyship the Queen's great victory at St. Albans. The Earl of Warwick has fled; the King is free, and has joined the Queen."

"Ha! Fine news, truly!" Isabel said, with a catch in her breath. "Go back to Sir William; I follow you instantly."

Antonio looked from Richard to Margaret, and vanished as she commanded. She too looked at them, at their young, puzzled faces, and laughed. Then she walked quickly across the room. Richard sprang to overtake her, but was too late. She passed through the door, banged it heavily, turned the great key with a grinding noise in the lock, and left the boy and girl together.

CHAPTER XII.

RICHARD MARLOWE tried and shook the door, stamped, shouted aloud, "Madam, Madam, this is too much!" swore a few courtly oaths very strange to Margaret's ears, then dashed to the window and seized its iron bars, which effectually stopped any wild idea of escape that way. He thrust his yellow head between them, however, and joined his voice to the clamour below. He saw his mother's velvet train sweeping up the steps into the hall, as she went to Sir William. A man or two looked up and laughed, but most of those in the court were Roden retainers, and the angry cries of an imprisoned Popinjay were nothing to them.

At last Dick turned and looked at Margaret. 'Twas no such hardship,

after all, to be shut up with so lovely a girl. To his eyes, of course, she had not the attractiveness of Alice Tilney, and he was still at a loss to understand his brother's sudden infatuation. Still, no doubt, she was beautiful. But why was there that horrible sadness, that bewildered, distressed look, on a face which should be laughing with joy at his brother's safety? Was his own company so terrible, then, or what was the matter with Mistress Margaret?

"Lord, how I hate these dismal ladies!" said Dick to himself; yet on the other hand, the kindness and chivalry of his young nature were all on Meg's side. He came to her where she stood, courteously offered his hand, and made her sit down near the fire.

"Your very humble servant, Mistress Roden," he said with a merry laugh. "As it has pleased my Lady to leave us together, we had better be friends than enemies. This news of my brother,—I care for that more than for victory of Red Rose or White—tell me more, I beseech you. Where is Harry, if you know it? Where has he been hiding and when will he be here?"

Meg looked at him as he strutted before her on the hearth. She clasped and unclasped her hands, not at once answering him. The distressed lines on her brow, the tragic question in her eyes, vexed and puzzled the young man more and more.

"Listen, Mistress," he said; his air, for Dick, was of extraordinary gravity. "When you came into this room, you looked as happy as a queen, happier than the Queen, I doubt, though they say she has her poor old Harry again—Heaven save us, Harry and Margaret, Margaret and Harry—was there ever so strange a chance? A Margaret with two Harrys, forsooth—that's not you! and a Harry

with two Margarets—that's who it may be! There, now, pretty sister, pardon my chatter and tell me all the truth." He came near and dropped on one knee, laughing again as he looked up into her face. She smiled and put out her hand to him; he kissed it lightly. "A fair, soft hand," he said. "Harry cheated me, and though I've forgiven him, as a Christian should, I see my fate might have been a worse one."

"Do not flatter me, Sir," Meg said. "I heard you but now as I came through the ante-room. There, —I do not understand all your chatter, as you call it, but I love your brother, you love my friend —shall we be friends, Master Marlowe?"

"Mistress Roden, I have no stronger desire. But one favour, fair lady,—let us be Meg and Dick, as sister and brother should. What I said but now—my mother provoked me—you would have been more sorry had I said I would have no wife but you."

"Sorry indeed,—for your disappointment," Meg said, her mouth trembling with laughter.

"The length of your eyelashes, Meg—have they been measured?" Dick asked very softly. "On my honour, I begin to think that if Harry had never been here, and if I had never seen her who—"

"Collect yourself,—set your mind at rest," Meg admonished him. "On my honour, I would never have married you."

"But why, fairest, why? It cannot be the same cause for which I swear on second thoughts I would never have married you,—that with all your divine beauty you are too solemn and too cold."

"No,—because you are too foolish and too young."

"What,—my youth and beauty a

reproach? 'Tis true, Harry is old and ugly—"

Meg laughed outright. Handsome enough he was, the young dandy, but that stiffly curled hair, that painted face, those cleverly darkened eyelashes! She shrugged her shoulders, moving her hands impatiently. After all, the boy was both amusing and sincere.

His love for Alice had in these last days awakened his lazy character and made a man of him, but Meg did not realise that. She began to give Dick credit for being by nature worthy to be Harry's brother.

"I am perplexed," she said. "I know not what to think. Surely my Lady your mother loves him,—loves Harry? Yesterday she promised me that if I would trust her, leaving myself in her hands, I should marry my Lord Marlowe and none else"—she stopped, suddenly remembering that Lady Marlowe had told her to be silent. "Well, no more of that," she said. "But when I brought her the news to-day, she did not, I thought, seem glad. She hardly listened, she was even angry, I fancied, but fancy it must have been—"

"Sweet sister, a warning," Dick said very kindly. "Never trouble your poor brain with trying to understand my mother. She is led by motives that you and I dream not of. Why, now, has she set her heart on marrying me and you? 'Tis no special advantage for you or me,—we are toys in her hands—but she wants Ruddiford, Meg,—'tis a key to the north; she wants it for York, I tell you. Edward of March is her king. As to caring for Harry,—he is the head of our House, but then, she is nought to him but a step-mother; 'tis not a tie of love, Meg, and he is Lancastrian to the marrow of his bones."

"Ah! they said it," Meg murmured to herself, remembering whispers that she had heard and scorned.

"'Twas the news of this victory that drove her away in a rage," Dick went on, watching her. "And more than that, you came at a bad moment, for she was angry with me, and I with her. They have dared to send Alice Tilney away, but I will take order for that."

"But," Meg said slowly, "she said that I should marry my Lord Marlowe and none else. How, then, would she gain Ruddiford?"

Dick laughed a little awkwardly. "She believed that Harry was dead," he said.

"And you, then—you—impossible!" the girl cried, and lifted her hands. "Is there no truth under heaven?"

Dick shrugged his shoulders. "Plenty, sweet Meg, as you and I will prove," he said. "Why so sad? A woman's plots need not have power to distract you thus. She cannot, shall not, marry us against our will. Come now, I ask you for news of Harry. Where is he, can you tell? And when will he be here?"

"He is in prison at King's Hall," Meg answered, half absently. "Alice told me last night, before they sent her away. It is all an evil plot that I cannot understand. They took him,—Jasper Tilney took him,—but that it was his doing only, I will not believe." She looked up into Dick's face grave and eager, and her eyes brightened as they met his. "You at least are honest," she said. "Come with me to my grandfather. He will give you men, and you shall fetch my Lord home to Ruddiford."

"At King's Hall? And Alice told me nothing! Does my mother know he is there?"

"Nay, you have heard what I said. There was no time to tell her more.

Yet I think there are those in this castle who know, and I do not trust. Oh, quickly, quickly, come to my grandfather!"

"Who is it you do not trust, fair lady? I will soon make him safe."

Meg looked away at the fire, and shook her head. She seemed, in the glow of the burning logs, to meet a darker flame that which burned in Antonio's eyes. She shuddered, and rose to her feet. "There is no time to lose. Come, come!" she said.

Dick did not move. "You forget," he said. "We are locked in; we are my Lady's prisoners. And if we were free, what use going to Sir William when she is there? Harry back,—she loses you and Ruddiford. No, she will not have him here. I do not say she wishes him ill, but if Harry were away with his Queen on a battle-field, he would be a safer man now. Let her know he is in so near a prison, and there he will remain. No, we must rather—but what of all this? We are locked in." He sprang up and strode to the window. "Down there," he said, "there is not a man who dares set us free."

Meg listening, as if in a dream, started with a sudden memory. "Dick," she said, "from your mother's bed-chamber there is a secret staircase to the outer barbican, and from there I know a certain way by steps into the town. No one uses it; 'tis forgotten, and never closed, except in times of riot. By that way you can leave the castle, slip round to the bridge, taking a horse and man, if you choose, from the stables on your way. Ride hard across the bridge, and follow the south road till a lane strikes off across broad fields to the right. Do you not remember, as you came, the church and the high gables of King's Hall? Harry is there."

"And Alice!" he said, half to himself. "Come, then, and quickly."

By a door under the hangings they stole into Lady Marlowe's inner room. All was still and silent there, except for the distant music and the clanging of joy-bells from the town for Lancaster's victory. Men and maids were all gone to gape with their fellows among the rejoicing crowd. Only some of Lady Marlowe's men went about dark and sullen, knowing on which side her sympathies were.

As they passed through, Dick seized a cloak and hood of his mother's and threw them on Margaret. She took them without question and silently led the way down the narrow stairs and through the outer precincts of the castle. The steps she had spoken of were open and unguarded; they climbed the wall, and crept down, steep and uneven, in the shadow of the gateway tower, ending at a narrow wicket, unfastened, but within view of the warder of the gate, had he been at his post; but he was away, drinking success to the Red Rose. In a few minutes Dick and Meg were in the dark, evil-smelling lane without the walls, not far from the sacred spot, then white with December snow, now black with February mud, where Lord Marlowe and his love had stood together on Christmas morning.

Dick's eyes,—they had lost their old lazy indifference and flashed boldly enough now—rested with some wonder on his companion. She had pressed on before him, saying nothing of turning back, but she now stopped and said, looking hurriedly up and down the empty lane: "I am thinking,—to take horses from the castle, we must enter again from the west gate, and though they would open the little postern to me, there might be those who—will you trust me? I will take you to one who would give me all he has—surely the horses in his stable—"

She was hastening on, turning from

the lane into a narrow street darkened by over-hanging houses, when Dick caught hold of her cloak: "Meg, you will not go with me?"

"Peace, peace," she said quickly. "Yes, I will go with you. I have thought,—he must not come back to Ruddiford, the enemies are too strong. And I fear he will, for I sent him a token by Alice last night. He must go back to the Queen, but I must see him first; and, forsooth, I tell you, if he will have me, I will go with him to the ends of the earth. That was what we promised, he and I."

"A moment!" Dick cried impulsively. "By the saints, you are a noble girl, and I honour you, and forgive Harry his sin; but they say King's Hall is not a place for such as you. They say 'twas cruel and wicked of Sir William to send Alice home, did my Lady press him never so hard. That brother of hers,—she told me he would marry you if he could—curse his impudence, but small blame to him! And his rollicking Fellowship—and suppose he will not set Harry free?"

"Who can tell, if no one asks him?" cried the girl. "And I trust no one but myself and you. Here, this is the way. No, I do not fear Jasper Tilney; there are worse men, I think, than he."

She darted suddenly under a low archway into a little cobbled yard surrounded with doors and long windows, arched with clustering ivy. Within one of these doors they could hear a horse stamping; from one of the windows, the lattice standing open, there came a strong smell of drugs and herbs. Close by was a dove-cote, from which the pigeons rose, spreading wings and tails with a great rustle, and perching on the uneven roofs and chimneys with a soft cooing among themselves. A pale sun shone down into this abode

of peace. As Dick and Margaret crossed the stones, a little old man raised his round face from the table he was leaning over, busily concocting medicines. For this was the dwelling of Simon and Timothy Toste, and the window was that of Master Simon's apothecary's shop.

Astonished at the sight of the two young people, he pulled off his black cap and hurried out into the yard, begging them to honour him by coming in. Dick, rude boy as he was at times, stood shaking with laughter at the odd little figure, almost as broad as it was long. He laughed still more at the lengthening of the round face, when Simon understood, as he quickly did, what the beloved young lady of the castle wanted of him. His horse—and Timothy's horse—both their horses? And what for? A ride in the country with Master Marlowe? A side-way glance seemed to tell Master Marlowe what Master Simon the apothecary thought of him. They had come to one of the most arrant gossips of the Midlands, though one of the best-natured men. Simon knew all that went on at the castle, and the summary expulsion of Mistress Alice Tilney had already reached his ears, with the castle comments on the same. He saw through the mad prank at once. Could not this graceless Marlowe go hunting alone for his love, but he must needs entangle Mistress Meg and carry her with him to the very arms of wild Jasper?

"With Sir William's and my Lady Marlowe's consent?" asked the wise Simon, putting his head on one side and pursing up his mouth. "But then, why not your worship's own horses? Saving your presence, 'tis like King David and the poor man's lamb. These two good humble beasts of ours—"

"There, Master Toste, you know well they are the best horses in Ruddiford," cried Meg impatiently. "And I could not dream you would refuse me anything, *me*—and on this joyful day when the bells are ringing, and all the men in the castle are drinking success to the Red Rose."

"Silly sots, they'll come to me to-morrow to have their aching pates cured," said Simon. "A ride in the country, you say, Mistress? The country is not so safe, what with bold beggars and Master Tilney's Fellowship; and with this young gentleman alone—'tis not seemly—"

"Who asked you to judge of seemliness, Master Apothecary?" cried Dick, with a threatening air. "Fetch out the horses as Mistress Roden bids you, or I'll teach you a lesson."

Simon was not to be intimidated. He set his arms akimbo and faced the young man with a smile.

"That is not the way to gain your ends at Ruddiford, Sir," he said. "I will ask Mistress Roden to step within, and to tell me more of this precious ride. I am an executor of her grandfather's will, and, in a certain sense, share her guardianship with my Lady your mother. I will not suffer you—"

"Hold thy tongue, old fool," laughed Richard. "I shall not run away with your mistress—is that your fear? She will tell you, my service is due in another quarter. If she rides with me to visit her friend, do you know of any danger at King's Hall that I cannot guard her from?"

"Plenty, young gentleman," Simon replied with dryness.

But then Meg seized her old friend by the arm and pushed him before her into the low dark room, leaving Dick, with a parting glance that implored patience, to kick his heels alone in the yard. It was not to

be expected that Master Marlowe would long be contented so. By way of amusement, it occurred to him to inspect the horses and judge of them for himself. They were excellent horses, in fact; Meg's praise was deserved. Without asking further leave the young gentleman set himself to look for saddles and bridles, and to prepare them for a journey.

It was a strange sight in Simon's little room, and one which Dick would scarcely have endured. The beautiful Mistress Roden, the Lady of Ruddiford, was on her knees beside the apothecary. To him, the old friend, who had doctored and watched and petted her from childhood, often repaid with rebellious ingratitude, Meg poured out her heart in hurried sentences. Simon's eyes grew rounder, his hair stood up on his head. What? Lord Marlowe was at King's Hall, taken and kept by Jasper in private jealousy? What? There were traitors in the castle, those who took the side of York, so that his Lordship, if set free, could not safely return there? Simon lifted his brows and clicked his tongue meaningly. "Ah, said we not so? Timothy's friend said it—ay, in high places—but nay, is it possible, is it natural, Mistress Meg?"

"Peace, peace, I tell you nothing, cried the girl. "Say not a word; hold thy tongue, Simon, and imagine nothing. Only let me go, dear Simon, lend me thy horse and let me go with his brother, who loves him. We two will save him,—Simon, dost hear, dear old friend?"

"I hear, mistress." The apothecary shook his head and groaned. "And his worship Sir William?" he said. "No, child. If I lend thee my horse, I am the worst traitor of all. I might open the gates to a Yorkist army and be a less sinner, for to Sir William, to the Vicar, my

brother and myself, your body and soul, child, are worth the realm of England. As to this mad Lord of yours, let Jasper Tilney keep him, say I."

"Well and wisely said, Master Toste," murmured a soft voice close by. "And now, have you any ratsbane?"

Margaret started violently and rose from her knees. Antonio was standing in the room, very white, staring and smiling strangely. At the same moment another door was pushed open, and two more figures appeared, tall and short, with lantern jaws and eyes that watched curiously,—Sir Thomas Pye and Timothy Toste.

Without a word to any of these new-comers, Mistress Margaret glided to the window and leaned out of it. "Master Marlowe," she called.

Instantly young Marlowe appeared from the stable, leading the best of the two horses. "Can you ride a man's saddle?" he asked gaily. "Or will you mount behind me? All is ready."

"Go yourself; I cannot come. Take my greeting. Set him free, send him away, tell him I am true till death and afterwards."

She turned from the window, meeting Antonio with a smile of fearless scorn, while Timothy and Simon rushed into the yard crying, "Stop, thief!" and the Vicar stood grimly by with his arms folded.

Dick Marlowe kissed the tips of his fingers, swung himself into the saddle and dashed under the archway and along the narrow street towards the bridge, at a pace which much amazed the strong and quiet horse he rode.

The shrieks of the owners availed nothing. Antonio laughed silently; it was no affair of his, since Master Richard rode alone. As for Margaret, she turned to Sir Thomas and said, "Come with me."

The priest bowed, and followed her. Antonio waited till the two brothers came panting back, and then renewed his demand: "Master Simon, have you any ratsbane?"

Lady Marlowe, walking restlessly up and down Sir William's room, forgetting her usual formalities in the excitement of the time and the difficulty of gaining her ends, found herself standing in the great window when a single horseman rode furiously upon the bridge, scattering groups of country-people whom the ringing of the joy-bells had drawn to the town. It seemed that the guards at the bridge-tower made no difficulty about this horseman; he rode through the midst of them, bending on his horse's neck, and the ground flew from under him as he galloped out into the country. Muffled in a cloak about the head and shoulders, he was not to be recognised, yet something in the line of the slight figure, in the way he sat his horse, puzzled my Lady a little. No, it could not be. She had Dick safe, locked in with Margaret; she smiled at the thought.

She turned sharply towards the old man, sitting crouched in his chair; he had returned there painfully, and the interview with her had already brought on a reaction, in his feeble body and mind, from the joyful excitement caused by the Red Rose victory. "A messenger has ridden forth, Sir William; did you send him?" Isabel demanded.

"Nay, nay, my Lady, I have sent no messenger."

"Who, then—" she paused, and muttered to herself: "Bribes may do something, and if my men be outnumbered, still they are better and stronger men. But a riding post to Edward—it may be wise—who would have thought these fools cared thus for the poor madman and his virago

wife! To rid myself of idiots—if I am opposed too far—Antonio—"

She glanced nervously towards the door. At first, Antonio had been present at the interview; but after a few minutes she had sent him suddenly away with a commission. "Fetch me ratsbane, a great dose," she said, and meeting his startled eyes, "Where are your wits?" she added, sharply and low. "My rooms are infested; day and night they run on the floor. Go,—do my bidding."

Both glanced at Sir William, but he did not notice them. His mind was full of the fight at St. Albans, of which a running post had brought him the particulars. The man was now feasting below in the hall; but Sir William had many questions yet to ask him, and his brain was occupied with them. Old memories of Agincourt, too, surged up at the very mention of a battle. He had begun to talk of it, and he was not best pleased that Lady Marlowe cut him short, as to victories old and new, to demand with some haughtiness the immediate marriage of her Richard and his Margaret. Why, he rather faintly wondered, this sudden and passionate haste? He answered her doubtfully, inclined to put the question by. Then she sent away Antonio; if he noticed it, he was glad, for the watchful presence seemed a little out of place in their talk together. These family matters,—but why did she plague him with them when he must think of other things? The children must be married, he supposed, though poor Meg liked it not. But what was my Lady demanding now?

She had walked back from the window, and was standing near him on the hearth.

"Sir William," she said, "I shall be forced, I fancy, to return home. The fighting about London—the

charge of my Lord Marlowe's house and people—wherever he, poor soul, may be—” she paused shuddering suddenly in spite of herself, and watching the old man with dark eyes full of terror and mystery. “Send for your vicar,” she said, “and let us marry Richard and Margaret this very day in your chapel—quickly—before noon. Yes, I know Ruddiford people would ask for a stately marriage in their church yonder, but good Lord, these are not times for ceremony. The changes of war are sudden and terrible—to-day Lancaster, to-morrow, perhaps, York. Besides, unhappily, we have not to do with a willing bride and bridegroom. You and I have checked Richard in his foolishness; Margaret, sweet maid, has promised to be my true and loving daughter; still it is not each other they would choose. Therefore, haste, haste, is the one thing. They must be married, they must be one; then only shall I feel that the future is safe,—for Margaret, for Richard, and for me.”

She stopped and waited. The old man looked at her vaguely. Mild, white, helpless, it seemed impossible that he should resist those fierce eyes, that resolute jaw. But he lifted his hand, as if to wave her away, and there was lit up suddenly, brightening every moment, a flame in the blue eyes that could on occasions be so angry.

“Madam, I see no such haste,” he said. “There will be no marriage

to-day. I rejoice that my Margaret has spoken dutifully to your Ladyship, but, I plainly tell you, no such marriage shall be forced upon her. It is my wish,—she knows it,—but, putting the past aside, she may well feel that the youth who could set Mistress Tilney before herself—”

“No such trifles must stand in the way,” Lady Marlowe said, and restrained her rage with difficulty. “Children's fancies—their duty must and shall be forced upon them. This is new teaching, indeed, of an indulgent grandsire,” she laughed. “I will answer for Richard,” she said, “my child, my chattel; and as to Margaret—”

“Madam,” the old man said, and sank back in his chair, “I am weary of this dispute.”

Sweeping through the door, Isabel met Antonio on the stairs. “Go to your master,” she said. “This fine victory is too much for his brain. Give him a cordial; then come to me. And the ratsbane, hey?”

“The apothecary had it not, or would not give it me,” Antonio muttered.

“Fool! You will over-reach yourselves, you folks of Ruddiford,” she said. “You cannot keep a secret. Mistress Margaret knows all.”

“And when she finds her birds flown, and Master Dick—” Antonio breathed, hurrying to his old master.

Pale and trembling, cursing Alice's tongue, he was yet not altogether discontented.

(To be continued.)

THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE "ELIZABETH."

THE wooden walls that used to be Great Britain's first line of defence have proved themselves a very efficient rampart in their day. Manned by those Mariners of England—

Who sailed upon the seas
To fight the wars, and keep the laws,
and live on yellow peas,

—they made this little island the centre of the British Empire. Yet in those days ships were but boards, sailors but men; there were neither steel hulls, nor highly trained scientific experts to handle them. There were water-worms as well as water-rats, and the *teredo navalis* soon bored his way through the four-inch plank of a ship's bottom when there was no copper sheathing to keep him out. The danger of fire was always present. The hulls were constitutionally weak in structure and were ill-fastened together. Now our sea-walls are hardened steel and their frames are as strong as the girders of a bridge; worms cannot touch them, fire has almost ceased to be a danger. It is more difficult to break up a modern battle-ship than it was to build an old one. Yet, in spite of all their imperfections those wooden ships lasted longer, and sometimes made a more obstinate fight against the ordinary dangers of the sea, than any of the steel-hulled leviathans of the present day.

When one old seventy-four came into collision with another, away went jib-boom, bowsprit, beak-head, and thirty or forty feet of solid bulwarks, till she looked as battered and dis-

reputable as Humphreys or Mendoza after a bout with bare knuckles. Yet she would keep herself and her people above water, patch herself up, and gravely go about her business. The CULLODEN (Troubridge's CULLODEN) was able to do her duty, and something more, at St. Vincent, thirty-six hours after her collision with the COLOSSUS. The steel ship, in similar circumstances, goes to the bottom. The VICTORIA, the ELBE, the OREGON, the LONDON,—which of us can tell how many others went the same road? A sea smashes in a hatch cover or an engine-room skylight, and then a long good-night to the latest triumph of the ship-builder, the last word in great four-cylinder inverted twin-screw engines. Or a sudden twisting, wrenching strain shears off a dozen rivet-heads and a butt-strap; the bilge-pumps go on working furiously till the surging water on the stoke-hold floor drowns the fires in a burst of steam; and then it is "time for us to leave her,"—in an open boat, with a sea that is hungry for the lives of men and lies wallowing, wan and hopeless, for a thousand miles before it finds a coast to break on. There are many things in the life of a sailor which are hardly to be found out by studying him on a Saturday night ashore.

It is little more than fifty years since iron ships began to supplant the oak or teak-built masterpieces of Blackwall, Aberdeen, and Liverpool, the last fulfilment of the dreams of many generations of shipwrights; and there is pathos in the thought that three hundred years of anxious study

brought the wooden sailing-ship to its highest perfection at the moment when inexorable science doomed it to extinction. Yet how many of the iron ships of 1865 are in existence to-day! We have records of many a century-old wooden vessel. Mr. Clark Russell has told us of the BETSY CAIRNS, wrecked off Shields in 1827; her age was unknown, but she was believed to be identical with the PRINCESS MARY that brought William of Orange to Torbay in 1688. He, too, speaks of the COGNAC PACKET built at Bursledon in 1792. She was still carrying coals from Seaham in 1886, ninety-four years after she slid down the ways with flags flying and the shipwrights cheering her as she went. What of the old PORT A-FERRY FRIGATE? The THREE SISTERS was her real name, and there is a paragraph in THE NAVAL CHRONICLE of 1802 announcing her arrival at Whitehaven "lately." She had carried provisions to the starving but unconquered garrison of Derry in 1689, and was supposed to be one hundred and thirty years old. That paragraph was solemnly reproduced, as current news, in a newspaper of 1902; but the THREE SISTERS was not immortal, and it would be hard to find a man in Whitehaven to-day who had even heard her name. Nelson's VICTORY is nearly a hundred and forty years old, though there is little, if anything, left in her of the great first-rate that was launched at Chatham in 1765.

From the point of view of the scientific naval architect there is as much difference between the old ships and the new, as there is between the flying coaches of 1820 and the express engines of to-day; but just as the biologists tell us that the lower organism often displays more tenacity of life than the higher, so the old vessels which relied more on the per-

tinacity of material than on scientific construction sometimes managed to survive dangers that would have made short work of the better-built ships of our time. Handled by the old seamen who understood them they would keep afloat as long as their timbers held together; and sometimes they would continue to keep the sea, and carry their people safely home, long after their flimsy hulls had begun to break up.

There was a certain old 64-gun ship in the year 1757, which was called the ELIZABETH. It would be a matter of some difficulty to ascertain her exact age; she may possibly have been identical with that ELIZABETH, of seventy guns, which was detached from Admiral Vernon's squadron in 1739, just before the capture of Portobello. Such as she was, she sailed from England to Madras in 1757, under the command of Captain Richard Kempenfelt (whose flag, as Rear-admiral, went down with him in the ROYAL GEORGE twenty-five years later). She carried the broad pendant of Commodore Charles Stevens, who was taking out the YARMOUTH (64), the WEYMOUTH (60), the NEWCASTLE (50), and the 24-gun frigate QUEENBOROUGH, to reinforce the fleet under vice-admiral Sir George Pocock. They joined the Admiral at Madras on March 24th, 1758, and the ELIZABETH took part in all his actions with D'Aché; in the battle off Cuddalore on April 29th, and again off Negapatam on August 3rd in the same year, when she had the honour of leading the British line into action. In the final battle fought on September 10th, 1759, she was commanded by Captain Richard Tideman, and again led the line. After that, the third and last battle that D'Aché fought in the East Indies, the French fleet retired to Mauritius.

Two years later the ELIZABETH was

still in the East Indies under the command of Captain Isaac Florimond Ourry. She hoisted the broad pendant of Commodore Tiddeman in the fleet of eight sail of the line which Rear-admiral Cornish led to the attack and capture of Manilla. Commodore Tiddeman was drowned by an unfortunate accident on October 5th, 1762, the day of the surrender. When the Seven Year's War came to an end the ELIZABETH was ordered home, and she sailed from Bombay on December 16th, 1763.

It was now six years since she left England, and she could not have had anything like a thorough refit during the whole of her long commission. Copper sheathing had not then been introduced, though it is possible that the bottom may have been filled with broad-headed nails as a protection against worms, a custom which was usual in the East India Company's service. Like all the ships of her day she was insufficiently fastened. The weakest point in their construction was in the attachment of the beams to the sides of the ship. Iron knees were unknown, and the heavy weight of the guns tended to spread the hull; a tendency which the timber knees imperfectly resisted. When the CENTAUR foundered on her way home after Rodney's action in 1782, her sides separated from the beams, and she practically fell open. The ELIZABETH had been battered in three fleet actions, beside enduring the storms and accidents of a six years' commission; and her condition was considered so far doubtful that all her lower-deck guns were sent ashore, and only sixteen of her 18-pounders were left mounted on the upper deck. Thus lightened she was allowed to sail, with hope rather than confidence that she would be able to make the voyage home in safety.

The account of her many perils and

her safe return is furnished by Mr. William Nichelson, the master, in his elaborate TREATISE ON PRACTICAL NAVIGATION, illustrated by several fine plates by T. Luny (an artist who had himself served in the Navy) and published in 1796. Throughout the whole seven months of danger and anxiety Nichelson seems not only to have attended to his navigation and the endless labour of keeping the ship afloat, but he found time also to make many scientific observations on the variation of the compass, ocean currents, and prevalent winds. It is perhaps characteristic of this most excellent and self-reliant seaman that he never mentions the captain or any other officer of the ship by name.

After leaving Bombay the ELIZABETH ran down the Malabar coast in fine weather and smooth water, and on the 30th she joined the NORFOLK, the AMERICA, and the CHATHAM, all homeward bound under Vice-admiral Cornish, whose flag was hoisted in the NORFOLK.

The little squadron took its departure from Calicut, and pleasant weather and fair winds lasted till January 31st, 1764, when they were about three hundred and sixty miles south of Mozambique. There they encountered a succession of fresh gales from north and east, and "a large sea from south-east which thwarted the north-east sea, and made it run very high." This was no weather for a weak ship; the ELIZABETH began to labour and strain every way, and leaked badly. The weather grew steadily worse, and presently the main topsail split and blew away. Everything was made snug; the mizen topmast was struck and the ship hove-to. Still she laboured and complained in every plank and timber, and the seams above water began to open. All the chain-pumps were kept constantly going, and men were set

to bale the water out of the fore-hatchway with buckets; but still the water gained upon them.

This was unpromising; but their real troubles began on the afternoon of February 1st. First, all the brick-work of the coppers and fire-grates fell down, for the dock was working under them like a spring-board. No food could be cooked. Four of the upper-deck guns were thrown overboard to ease the ship, and by eight o'clock in the evening all the pumps were going and men were baling at all the hatchways; even then the water sometimes gained upon them, and at midnight they had six feet eight inches in the hold. She would have gone down then and there had she carried no more than a merchantman's crew; but her four hundred and odd men kept her afloat by sheer pumping. They were inside the ship, the Indian Ocean at present was outside; but it became a serious question how long they would be able to keep it there.

Still the weather grew worse and the sea more dangerous. Like the hungry wolves that follow up the weakest deer in the herd, their fury increased step by step with the weakness of the quarry, and they battered the half-foundered ship that seemed so nearly their prey, till the water in the hold rose full twelve inches in one half hour. Then the captain called the officers to a consultation. It was at first proposed to cut away the masts; but the master denounced the idea as madness. It would ease the ship, certainly; but it would take away her last poor chance of reaching the shelter of a port. It was then decided to wear the ship, in order to bring the wind on the starboard quarter and so lift the leaky starboard side as far out of the water as possible, in the hope that the larboard planking might prove tighter. Their

hope was justified, for on this tack they found that they could just keep the leak from gaining on them.

When Nichelson went forward to give the order to wear ship, it was dark on the upper gun-deck, and he could see no one. "Where are you all got to?" he cried, and a low voice near him answered "To our prayers, Sir!" All hands were on their knees; they had given up all hope. When he called them to their duty, not a man of them stirred, till he called them ill names and bade them do their part and trust to God to do His. Then said they, "Tell us what to do, Sir, and we'll obey orders." From that time forward they never flinched.

Their consorts were all out of sight. The ELIZABETH and the Indian Ocean were left to fight it out between them.

During the whole of the next day they could see the upper part of the hull open and shut as she rolled this way and that. In the afternoon they struck the main-topmast. At nine o'clock the tiller (which, as usual, worked in the gun-room on the lower gun-deck) broke short off in the rudder-head. Another tiller was shipped. In the morning the weather moderated and they sighted the AMERICA, four miles away. During the forenoon they unrigged the main and mizen-topmasts, and got them both down on deck; then the jib-boom and sprit-sail-yard were got in, to ease the straining and working of the bows. The master had no observation of the sun for several days; by their reckoning they were two hundred and seventy miles south of Mozambique.

On the 3rd the tiller broke again; and Nichelson, suspecting that there was "something more than common the matter with the rudder," took the carpenter down into the

gun-room. Watching for a smooth, when the ship was comparatively quiet, they cautiously opened the stern port on the weather side, whence they could obtain a view of the rudder. What they saw was interesting. The upper pintle-iron of the rudder was broken, and so was the gudgeon on the stern-post into which it fitted; all the pintle-irons above water had worked loose; the iron braces which held the upper gudgeons to the stern-post had drawn their nails, having only been fastened through the plank, instead of through the transom timbers as they should have been: the whole rudder and its fittings had consequently broken loose. If the braces below water followed their example and drew their nails out, the leak would overpower the pumps; so, making a signal of distress which brought the AMERICA down to them, they unhung the rudder and let it go adrift, with a blessing on the dock-yard shipwrights who had only half fastened it.

After the rudder had gone they could hear the water rushing in through the nail-holes of the second gudgeon-iron, which had torn off when the rudder went. This water made its way into the bread-room, and damaged much of the bread. When the room was cleared, Nicholson looked into the space between its after bulkhead and the transom, a place where the gunner kept small stores, known by the curious name of *Lady's Hole*; the *Lady of the Gun-room* was the watchman whose duty it was to keep the gun-room clean, and mount guard there at night. Here they found the water gushing in through the nail-holes like a fountain. Nevertheless, the leaks had lessened as the sea went down, till they could keep the ship clear with two chain-pumps only. The

fore-topmast was now got down on deck and a jury-topmast sent up in its place. But it was necessary to do something to strengthen the frame of the ship, which had little more rigidity than a wicker basket, and was fast working itself to pieces; and they had to improvise some sort of a contrivance to steer her with. The ELIZABETH was hove to, three or four hundred miles south of Mozambique, with the AMERICA standing by; and then both operations were carried on simultaneously. From the 3rd of February till the 8th,—for six days—the monotonous entry appears in the log, day after day: "Fresh gales; the people employed in making a machine to steer the ship by, and in frapping the ship in several places."

It was time that something was done to hold the rickety frame together. The chain-plate bolts that held the shrouds had drawn two or three inches out of the ship's side. The treenails (thick wooden pins which fastened the skin-planking to the timbers) were like almonds in a pudding, some of them standing three inches outside the plank, others projecting as far inboard. The decks worked with every roll of the ship. Sometimes the bolts rose out of the deck and with the next heave sank back again, while other planks rose off the beams, bringing the nails with them. It was dangerous to walk or stand in the worst places. The standards or pillars that supported the deck-beams occasionally rose as much as six inches off the deck below. Water poured down everywhere, for the deck-seams gaped open at every roll, and there was no dry place for the men to sleep in. The gunwale at the gangway entrance,—that is, where the quarter-deck bulwark breaks off abreast of the mainmast,—was broken in two, and the fracture

went down to the upper gun-deck below it. She was no longer a ship,—only a rickety scaffolding.

We have most of us heard of frapping a ship. When St. Paul's ship was under-girded between Crete and Malta, the principle was the same; but few seamen of the present day have ever had occasion to resort to it. Nicholson's Treatise contains a careful description of his method. "Upon the upper gun-deck were six lashings, kept close down to the port-sills. These were hawsers which were passed out and in through two opposite ports on each side and bowed as tight as possible; as the turns were passed, there were cross turns passed the fore and aft way. A capstan bar was put in by way of a lever, which being well manned and turned round, hove the frapping as tight as possible, and was then made fast to keep it so." Of these upper deck frappings two were under the quarter-deck, one over the main hatchway, one over the fore hatchway, one at the fore-castle-bulkhead, one under the fore-castle-bulkhead, and one under the fore-castle. Another was passed round the cut-water, both ends brought through the doors at either side of the head, and hove tight at the foresail-sheet bitts. There were two frappings above on the fore-castle, and two on the quarter-deck, hove taut with levers in the same manner. Beside all these, the lower gun-deck was bound together by six frappings, two aft, two amid ships, and two forward. The lower-deck ports were closed, and in such weather it would have been suicidal to open them; therefore the hawsers were passed through the ring bolts on each side to which the gun-breechings had been secured, and hove taut with cross-turns and lever as before. Thus in seventeen places the hull was lashed together from one side to the other; and the plan was so far effec-

tive in preventing the working of the frame that the leaks could be kept under with two chain-pumps, going day and night. They improvised a cooking-place by nailing cants on the upper deck under the fore-castle; the deck between them was then paved with shot, a layer of shingle-ballast spread over the shot and the fire made upon the ballast.

The boatswain's stores supplied the frappings; then came the carpenter's job. Nicholson had been master of the GRAFTON when she lost her rudder off Louisbourg in 1757, and by the light of that experience he set the carpenter to work. A spare topmast, about fifty feet long, was sawn in two, lengthways, from head to heel. A quantity of three-inch oak plank, fourteen inches wide, was sawn into twelve-foot lengths, and a dozen of them laid side by side. Two fourteen-foot planks across the top and two more across the bottom, through-bolted from side to side, made a stout shutter, which Nicholson compared to the "blade" of a key. A mortice was cut in each part of the topmast, three feet from the heel, to hold the blade between them. Then the blade was laid on the quarter-deck, with one part of the topmast under and the other over it; and the whole was bolted firmly together, making a "key" with a shank forty feet long and wards twelve feet wide. The two parts of the shank were bolted and lashed together from one end to the other. Four stout ring-bolts were screwed into each side of the blade, one at each corner, with thimbles to which were fitted two spans of eight-inch hawser and to these the long steering hawsers were attached. Pigs of iron were lashed to the lower part of the blade to keep it upright in the water.

Next, the end of the sheet-cable was taken out through the middle

window of the ward-room (the lower tier of stern windows), and brought in over the taffrail. This was stopped along both sides of the shank, with an extra lashing at the head, or after-part. A wooden davit was rigged out of the same window, projecting ten feet out-board; the deck above was cut through and the inboard part lashed to the beams overhead. From a quarter-deck port on each side two outriggers were run out, with a large block at the end of each, fifteen feet from the side. Through these blocks the steering hawsters passed to a block at each gangway entrance, thence to the after-capstan on the quarter-deck, which served as a steering-wheel. The whole machine hung by the shank from the end of the davit, slung by a cable no longer than the davit's length outboard, lest it should be driven like a battering-ram against the stern.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of February 8th the machine was launched overboard and hung in its proper place. In such wise the ELIZABETH, with the AMERICA in company, steered for the Cape, under jury-topmasts, a broken ship, tied together with string, and steered by a rattletrap. "Their spirits were much raised," writes Nichelson, "in the hope that they might yet reach the Cape by the blessing of Providence, to whom they were truly thankful for their deliverance from the late storm, and sending them safe into port after all their troubles." It was on March 9th that they sighted the Cape, after being for thirty-nine days without a rudder, pumping day and night. Vice-admiral Cornish, with the NORFOLK, CHATHAM, and AMERICA, was there before them; but while they were yet a great way off, they were boarded by two launches bringing anchors, cables, and offers of assistance from two French ships

anchored there, who had heard of their distress, the COMTE DE PROVENCE and the VENGEUR. The ELIZABETH and the COMTE DE PROVENCE had begun the action off Negapatam six years before, and in all D'Aché's three battles these three ships had blazed into one another. It was a pleasant touch of the old chivalry of France that brought those two launches to their old enemy in her distress; and Nichelson records that they were exceedingly polite, and admired his steering-machine.

The ELIZABETH should have been condemned at the Cape as a matter of course. She was utterly unseaworthy; yet Vice-admiral Cornish, acting probably upon a report by the carpenters of the squadron, would not allow it. Nichelson declares that it was determined that the ship should go home, even at the risk of drowning all her people. It is to be hoped that he misunderstood the Admiral's reasons; but if such an order were ever given, the man who gave it deserved to be hanged.

When they arrived at the Cape, says Nichelson, they were relieved from their trouble and care. They lay at anchor in Table Bay from March 9th till April 17th, and this was how they rested from their labours. All hands were employed in refitting the ship in the best way they could. They got two hand-pumps down the fore-hatchway to pump the fore-hold clear, for the ship was so broken and clogged below that the water could not run aft to the pump-well. She was so out of shape and hog-backed that a man standing abaft in the ward-room and looking at another standing under the fore-castle could only see him down to the waist, because the deck rose like a hill between them, and each end lay at the bottom of a declivity. The fracture at the gangway was spread-

ing further down the side. If ever they were to reach England in her, the crazy old timbers must be strengthened and stiffened somehow to encounter the long Atlantic swell and the short, broken seas of the Channel. As a commencement, they caulked in all the lower-deck ports, and covered the sides and the decks with canvas to keep the water out and give the people a chance of lying dry in their hammocks. The canvas was paid all over with pitch. All the iron ballast was hoisted out, and sent on board the other ships, because iron ballast was too valuable to be wasted; but His Majesty's officers, seamen, and marines stayed with their rotten ship.

They procured some very light timber and made a new rudder, fourteen inches narrower than the old one, with the after-part, or back, much thicker than the fore-part; by this device it offered more resistance to the water when the helm was put over. Though smaller and lighter it proved just as effective as the old one; but for fear of accidents, their much admired "machine" was carried on deck. All the seventeen frappings were hove up taut; and having thus done everything that lay in their power to secure their unseaworthy ship, they put to sea in obedience to orders on April 17th, in company with the rest of the squadron. They found that their narrow rudder steered the ship quite as well as the old broad one; which was further evidence to that excellent seaman William Nicholson of "the mistaken ideas of the people in the shipwright line in this, as in many other instances respecting a ship."

They arrived at St. Helena on April 30th; and as the bows still continued to work and strain very much, it was thought advisable to lighten the weights forward. "The

sheet- and spare anchors were sent down the main-hatchway into the hold, and the small and best bower anchors were brought as far aft as possible, with their flukes in the upper-deck port just abaft the chess-tree." That would bring them to the waist, well abaft the fore-castle. They left St. Helena on May 6th, and by a special Providence they had a pleasant passage and fairly good weather. The ship leaked less than they had anticipated, never needing pumping more than twice in the hour. They could not carry much sail for fear of straining her, but she wriggled her limp body through the seas somehow, though she worked and racked herself in a way that was terrible to behold. "With a head sea there was always fear that she might part in the middle, but it pleased God she held together which was as much as we could say, for nothing but the frappings could have held her together." On July 14th, they dropped anchor in Spithead, ten weeks after leaving St. Helena and seven months after they had sailed from Bombay. In spite of all his distractions Nicholson, Master and Navigator, kept careful account of the variations of the compass and all ocean currents observed throughout the voyage, and made his landfall at the Start within a mile or so.

When the ELIZABETH dropped anchor in Spithead she was ordered round to Chatham to be paid off, but it was not considered safe to send her there till something had been done to keep her together. It was all very well to send her on a six thousand mile voyage from the Cape, for if she had foundered in the Atlantic it might have passed as an ordinary accident of the sea; but the Channel was too near home, and her loss might have caused a scandal; so shipwrights and caulkers were sent

from Portsmouth Dockyard to do what might be necessary to carry her on to Chatham.

When the men from the Dockyard came on board the ELIZABETH they had an experience which was new to them. They found themselves on a ship which had practically come unfastened above the water-line and was held together by ropes, covered, decks and all, with pitched canvas, and hog-backed in the middle like Portsdown Hill. To add to their comfort they were warned that it would not be safe to take off any of the seventeen frappings which alone held her together. They looked at her, considered her, and at once insisted upon being taken ashore again. In their opinion their lives were not safe upon her as she lay in Spithead. As they declined the job entirely, the ship was sent up the harbour to be paid off, and the Admiralty sent down orders that she was to be broken up. Little labour was required; when the frappings were taken off she was ready to fall to pieces.

"She had been altogether eight years on her voyage to the East Indies and back," wrote Nicholson. Thus ended a good old ship that had done great service, and for which I

had great veneration, though I had so much trouble in her."

W. J. FLETCHER.

NOTE.

There was a curious similarity between this adventurous voyage of the ELIZABETH and that of Captain James Lancaster, the pioneer of our East Indian trade, in 1602. Lancaster sailed in 1601 upon his second voyage to India (the first undertaken by the newly-formed East India Company) in the DRAGON, of about eight hundred tons; she had formerly been the MALICE-SCOURGE, built for George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, who was one of the founders of the Company. The DRAGON sailed from Bantam, homeward bound, on February 20th, 1602. Midway between Madagascar and the Cape her rudder was carried away and she drifted nearly down to 40° south. Her consort the HECTOR, (Captain Sanderbole, "an honest and good man, who loved the General well,") remained in company, though Lancaster urged him to make the best of his way home. The DRAGON's mizen-mast was taken out and passed over the stern to act as a steering machine; but being too heavy, it shook the ship dangerously. Then the carpenters cut it up and built a rudder; but all the irons, save two, had been carried away and there was nothing to hang it to. A temporary sling was improvised which enabled them to reach St. Helena, where Lancaster refitted his ship. He anchored in the Downs on September 11th, 1602.

A RUSSIAN PRISONER IN JAPAN.

WASSILI MIKHAILOVITCH GOLOWNIN is forgotten now ; yet he should not be, for at this moment, if never before, he deserves to be recalled to the memory of the world. He was a man who by accident, about a century ago, when Japan and Russia were cut off from one another nearly as completely as the worlds of the living and the dead, penetrated the mysteries of the secret land and gave them to the Western nations.

The gallant and accomplished Golownin, a captain in the Russian Navy, was captured by the Japanese in the year 1810, while peacefully surveying the coast of the neighbouring Kurile Islands, and held in durance for two years. It was then that he suffered and observed many strange things, which he afterwards set down in a book. His *NARRATIVE OF MY CAPTIVITY IN JAPAN* was translated from the original Russian into English, French, and German, so eager was the Western world for knowledge of that strange people of the East.

The circumstances of his detention were characteristic. Some years before, one Lieutenant Chwostoff, of the Russian Navy, found himself in Eastern seas, and in the lightness of his heart proceeded to rob and burn sundry Japanese villages ; he made free with their stores and laid waste their crops, with the result that many of the villagers died of hunger and cold. The Japanese bore this carefully in mind, and when the unsuspecting Golownin came feeling his way down the island from Kamtschatka on board the *DIANA*, they decoyed him ashore and clapped him into

gaol, together with a handful of his men.

The unfortunate Russians were treated with the utmost courtesy, but their hands and feet were bound extremely tightly and the knots inspected every quarter of an hour. It was explained to them that this was an honour accorded only to important prisoners. They were hurried over land and sea to Hakodate, then to Matsmai, and afterwards to Nagasaki.

The Captain was shut up in a wooden cage six feet square by eight feet high, commanding a fine view of the surrounding country. A Russian sailor was allowed to bear him company in case he might feel lonely. The cage was so frail that he was convinced he could, with the aid of a common knife, cut his way out in three hours ; but unfortunately he had no knife. The cages of the others were smaller, and stood in the middle of a large room. The prisoners had to crawl into them through little holes, and were almost in total darkness. For food they had boiled rice and soup made of warm water with grated radish in it, or bean-meal puddings with a sauce of rancid whale-oil, garlic and beans, and pickled cucumbers. They drank warm water, and occasionally, for a treat, bad tea without sugar.

When by good behaviour they had begun to win the confidence of their captors they were treated with increasing indulgence. They were allowed to wash themselves in a big tub of warm water ; but they were disgusted to find that they were all

expected to use the same water, looking upon such treatment "as below what is due even to common criminals." Presently, however, they were reassured to observe the superb Imperial soldiers contentedly following in the same tub. Then their dignity was saved, and "It is evident," notes the Captain, "that the Japanese entertained no disgust or horror of Christians, and do not, like other Asiatics, regard them as unclean."

The poor Captain's method of keeping a journal was ingenious and pathetic. He had no ink nor paper, of course; but when any comparatively agreeable incident happened to his party he pulled out a thread from the frill of his shirt and tied a knot in it; a disagreeable one he commemorated by knotting a black thread from his neckerchief; a green thread from the lining of his uniform coat signified an event neither joyous nor sorrowful. From time to time he would count over the knots and recall each event.

In 1806 Chwostoff had annexed the island of Saghalien on his own account. The copy of his proclamation was now produced, and the poor Russians saw themselves faced with death or eternal captivity as spies. To add to their horrors, it was discovered that one of their men, a native of the Kuriles, had been among a party of his countrymen seized by the Japanese in the previous year. To save their own necks, these Kuriles had stoutly declared that the Russians had forced them to enter Japan in order to pave the way for a subsequent invasion by seven ships. It was a complete lie, but the lying had now become so complicated that the mere simple truth was the last thing that Golownin's captors could be expected to believe. Moreover, their position was

not improved by the extraordinary achievements of the interpreter. The best that this well-meaning gentleman could make of an important Japanese judicial utterance was this: "Thou art a man—I am a man—such another is a man—say what sort of a man?"

The most striking point of the Captain's whole narrative is the intense and insatiable curiosity of the Japanese touching the ways of the Western barbarians, from whom they had for centuries intentionally cut themselves off. They were politely but unremittingly inquisitive. Their pertinacity was astonishing, their patience endless; they would cheerfully spend an hour over a single question, and every answer was taken down with the most minute exactness. Their laws, they said, required that they should seek information from all foreigners who visited them, and observe and write down everything, whether true or false, which might be told; afterwards they would compare the various accounts and separate truth from fiction.

The captives were required to produce dozens of drawings of Russian ships, sheep, goats, horses, asses, coaches, sledges, and the Czar's hat. Their autographs, or the Russian alphabet, or any kind of writing in the strange tongue, were required upon scores of fans.

Once when the Captain was asked to write something in Russian for a Japanese officer he wrote this: "The Russians who may hereafter come in force to this place are hereby informed that the Japanese in a treacherous and cowardly manner seized seven of their countrymen and without any cause imprisoned and kept them languishing in dungeons like the vilest criminals. These unfortunate Russians implore you to take a just vengeance on this faithless

people." It will be observed that he said nothing about Chwostoff. Unfortunately the Japanese officer took his fan to another of the Russians and asked him to translate what Golownin had written. "It is a very old song, which cannot easily be translated," said the ingenious Russian.

The Russian words that they spoke were carefully taken down to make a vocabulary. They were required to teach the language to a gentleman of the name of Murakami-Teske and to help him to draw up a statistical account of Russia and other European States. As a matter of fact, the Japanese had almost everything they desired to know in a copy of Tooke's *VIEW OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE*, but the poor captives were afraid to tell them so lest they should have to translate the whole book into Japanese.

"We were very willing," writes the Captain, "to communicate the moral tenets of the Christian religion, the Ten Commandments, and some notion of the Gospel. They told us that these principles were not peculiar to Christians but that they were common to all individuals who had white hearts, and that the Japanese themselves had long been familiar with them." What they were really anxious to know was why the Russian priests opened and shut a door several times during the same service, and what was contained in the goblets they brought out of the cupboards. It is much to be questioned if the good Golownin knew all that himself.

Some of their notions were curious. They considered that as an older Russian navigator had been seen to wear a powdered pigtail, while the new arrivals had short hair unpowdered, some change of religion must have taken place in Russia. When

told that there was positively no connection between Russian religion and Russian hair they laughed loudly.

The climax of irritating curiosity was reached when a deputy-governor named Otachi-Korki asked the Russians what they ate when they were sick. "Whatever the physicians prescribe," said they, "which is commonly broth made of fowls or chickens." Otachi-Korki copied down the recipe with great minuteness and observed that the Japanese could cook it also; but they did not, at least not for their prisoners.

The Russians naturally regarded their captors as an outlandish and barbarous people. Yet the material which Golownin gives us, although he was plainly not aware of its significance, shows that in some respects the civilisation of Japan was far in advance of the civilisation of Russia and indeed of Europe. He records what he is pleased to describe as a "very laughable circumstance." One day an old officer, sixty years of age, brought them three portraits of Japanese ladies, very richly dressed, intimating with much ceremonial courtesy that the captives might amuse themselves by looking at them when time hung heavily on their hands. But "indeed," says the Captain, "the figures were so wretchedly designed that they were calculated only to excite aversion and ridicule." They therefore got rid of them by presenting them to the interpreter, Kumaddschero. Now, there is every reason to believe that these pictures were by old Japanese masters and enormously valuable.

The Japanese were also unfeignedly astonished when they found that the Russian sailors could not write, a thing that every Japanese, even of the lowest class, could do.

On the other hand, comparing Golownin's description of the Russian

Empire with an old book which they possessed, "relating to our ancestors and not to us the Japanese, who adhere to their old laws and customs with extraordinary pertinacity, they were unable to conceive how a whole nation could have undergone so great a change in so short a period." This is curious, for one may well believe that the Japanese themselves had achieved a far greater change in a far shorter time. In fact, a strong if not the chief reason of the Japanese for keeping their captives so long appears to have been, not revenge or hostility, but sheer craving for information. While in captivity, it may be mentioned, Golownin heard the news of the burning of Moscow.

In the Captain's narrative we may trace the inception of the Japanese Intelligence Department, famous now all the world over. "Under pretence of curiosity," the Captain tell us, "they asked us the extent of our land and sea forces. We thought it advisable to give an exaggerated account of both. We increased the number of the fortresses and the amount of garrison in Siberia, and distributed at pleasure numerous fleets in the harbours of the coast of Okotzk, in Kamtschatka, and on the north-western coast of America."

Incidentally we are also treated to a diverting account of the subjection of the Kuriles by Japan. After a long and tiresome war, the Japanese made proposals of peace, which were joyfully accepted by the Kuriles. A public celebration of the happy event was arranged. Forty Kurile chiefs and a number of their bravest warriors were invited into a large house. The Kuriles, like many brave men before and after them, were fond of ardent liquors, with which they were vigorously plied. The Japanese also pretended to be drunk, and one by one excused themselves and withdrew. They then shut all the doors and murdered their guests by shooting them with arrows through apertures carefully prepared beforehand. The heads of the Kuriles were then cut off, salted, and despatched to the capital as trophies of the victory.

Once Golownin and his men managed to escape, but were recaptured. In the end, however, their comrades of the *DIANA* returned and dug them out. Everything ended happily, and "The Kurile Alexei, as a reward for his good conduct, was presented with a hanger and received instead of a pension twenty pounds of powder and forty pounds of shot."

RUSKIN AS AN ART-CRITIC.

It has been said that we should say nothing but what is good of the dead. This is one of those injunctions which we cannot always carry out to the letter, for there are some that have left us whom it is expedient neither to praise nor to forget. But there is a time when by a sort of general consent the rule is observed with especial strictness, and that is when a man has just died. For there is something in the nearness of death which shuts our eyes to a man's faults, and opens them to his virtues. And it is an incident of this that we look coldly upon those who have disparaged him; and thus in our observance of the rule in a particular general esteem than at the present case we sometimes forget its general application.

Ruskin, as an authority upon art, has perhaps never stood lower in the moment. The reason of this is that the artist of whose work he was the most distinguished and the most persistent adverse critic has lately died. People point with a scornful finger at the man who, though he was never tired of praising Turner, the father of impressionism, could call Whistler, the great impressionist, a coxcomb; and one writer, in *THE PALL MALL GAZETTE*, has even gone so far as to say, in effect, that loud praise from Ruskin was like faint praise from other men, and only a Turner could have survived it.

It is probably by this time pretty generally recognised that the debt that we owe to Ruskin is not primarily for what he did and said about art. It was as a moralist and a

philosopher that he was really great. Of course when a man of high intellectual powers devotes a large portion of his life to the study of a subject, it is inevitable that his labours must possess a certain value. We may even go further than that, and say that when a man of high intellectual powers chooses to write upon a subject, what he writes must possess a certain value; but it is quite possible that the kernel of the nut may be found in his digressions, or in light incidentally thrown upon other matters. Ruskin's writings upon art possess very great value; but their value is not for what they tell us about art, but for what they tell us about Ruskin. Every page of *MODERN PAINTERS* is worth reading, not because its author was a great art-critic, but because he was a great philosopher and moralist. No time is wasted which is spent in the company of the wise and good.

This was not, of course, at all Ruskin's own view of the matter. He looked upon the study and elucidation of art, if not indeed upon its practice, as his vocation. The time that he spent upon his philosophical writings he regarded as stolen by the force of circumstances from his proper pursuits, to the world's ultimate loss as well as his own. Had he not been filled with indignation against all the evils of the time in which he lived, we might never have had any of these writings. His feelings in approaching these subjects were those of a civilian who is suddenly called upon to take up arms in defence of his country, but who believes that

he can serve her much better in the peaceful following of his daily calling.

It is the first mild day of March [he says in one of the letters to Thomas Dixon], and by rights I ought to be out among the budding banks and hedges, outlining sprays of hawthorn and clusters of primroses. That is *my* right work; and it is not, in the inner gist of it, right nor good, for you or for anybody else, that Cruikshank with his great gift, and I with my weak, but yet thoroughly clear and definite one, should both of us be tormented by agony of indignation and compassion till we are forced to give up our peace and pleasure and power, and rush down into the streets and lanes of the city and do the little that is in the strength of our single hands against their uncleanness and iniquity . . . For my own part I mean these very letters to close my political work for many a day; and I write them not in any hope of their being at present listened to, but to disburthen my heart of the witness I have to bear, that I may be free to go back to my garden lawns, and paint birds and flowers there.

Now Ruskin himself was an upholder of the verdict of posterity upon a man's work, and the verdict of posterity upon him is that he was one of the greatest moralists that we have ever had, and absolutely insignificant as an artist. The mind which Mazzini called the most analytical in Europe entirely mistook its own vocation. But it is by no means always a bad thing for a man to mistake his vocation provided he does in fact do a good deal of the work for which his gifts really fit him. The best work is done almost unconsciously. As Ruskin himself said, "the most beautiful actions of the human body and the highest results of the human intelligence are conditions or achievements of quite unlaborious—nay, of recreative effort." A man may easily labour over much at what he conceives to be his proper occupation. He may work at it until he has lost

all individuality and all inspiration; and at the same time he may bring to something else, in which he feels strongly but thinks he is not especially concerned, the freshness and fire of genius. Art is to conceal art, especially from ourselves. The thing that a man is really fitted to do is the thing that he is impelled to do, not the thing that he has carefully and conscientiously studied how to do. That was the case with Ruskin. That impulse to rush down into the streets and lanes of the city was the true calling in his case. And it was all the better that he did not know it. His conscientious outlining of leaves and twigs prevented him from doing great work as an artist, but it probably conduced in no small degree to his doing great work as a philosopher. A simple manual occupation is, with quiet minds, helpful to calm and discerning thought.

All this is very well illustrated in Ruskin's criticism of art. His criticism of art was not only the criticism which you would have expected from a man who was a philosopher and not a painter, it was also the criticism which you would have expected from a man who believed himself to be a painter rather than a philosopher. There is one thing that Ruskin did with respect to art for which we owe him everlasting gratitude; he constantly asserted the importance of the connection of art with ethics. He recognised and emphasised the fact that the function which a work of art has to perform in relation to human beings is that they should be the better men for looking at it. That he was able to do this followed naturally from his clear insight into the fundamental laws of human nature. Ruskin recognised the profound truth of the not very paradoxical statement that a thing is of no use to a man unless it benefits

him. He recognised, for instance, that a poor man who is healthy and happy is more enviable than a rich man who is neither. That was the foundation of his attacks upon the political economists. He saw and stated that the important thing is not to understand the laws of human life as they affect our pockets, but to understand them as they affect ourselves. He saw that a man may get more benefit from a thing that costs twopence than from another thing that costs a thousand pounds. And he accordingly asserted that price is not the real test of value. The effect of *MUNERA PULVERIS* and *UNTO THIS LAST* was not to show that political economy was wrong; it was to show that it was an affair of comparatively small importance. Because in these books Ruskin took account of human feeling, which is just as necessary and just as common a thing as the human body or human reason, he has been persistently derided as a sentimentalist. That is illogical. You might as well call a man an acrobat because he had written a treatise on anatomy. Some day, however, it will be realised that he was treating, quite dispassionately, the most important of the sciences.

The fact that appeared to Ruskin to give the key to human conduct was that nothing is really of value to a man unless it bring health to his body or exercise and development to his mind and feelings. There may be physical experience which is agreeable but does not tend to increase health; it is of no use to the body. There may be mental occupations which are agreeable, but do not tend to increase mental power; they are of no use to the mind. There may be experiences of feeling which are agreeable and yet do not tend to increase morality; they are of no use to the feelings. And what is of no use to the body,

the mind, or the feelings is of no value to man. The agreeableness of these experiences is illusory, and would never be felt but for disordered and perverted instinct. That, we take it, was the gospel of Ruskin, as it was the gospel of the founder of Christianity. It is the most solid science you can have.

Being then a great philosopher Ruskin had of course a very great qualification for understanding the significance of painting. Philosophy, in the sense of an accurate understanding of the principles which should guide human conduct, may almost be said to embrace all the other sciences. It teaches us the true significance of mathematics, chemistry, physics, and the rest. That is a philosophy in which a child may be more proficient than the most learned professor. Ruskin had a great deal of this philosophy, and it is therefore not surprising that he was able to say something of great importance about art. Had he lived in an ideal world he would have been able to say things of greater importance still; but because he did not live in an ideal world his very greatness as a philosopher was in some respects an obstacle to him. Such was the power over Ruskin of his own genius for the understanding of the problem of human conduct, and so intense was his desire to impart an understanding of it to others, that he was led to look upon the bettering of the lives of men as a supreme object to which all human effort of every kind ought to be directed. The result was that he regarded the study of art almost as a branch of the study of morals; nay more,—he regarded it as a means to the inculcating of moral principles. The closing words of the introduction to *THE SEVEN LAMPS OF ARCHITECTURE* are a remarkable illustration of this.

I have ventured, at the risk of giving to some passages the appearance of irreverence, to take the higher line of argument wherever it appeared clearly traceable; and this, I would ask the reader especially to observe, not merely because I think it is the best mode of reaching ultimate truth; still less because I think the subject of more importance than many others; but because every subject should surely, at a period like the present, be taken up in this spirit, or not at all. The aspect of the years that approach us is as solemn as it is full of mystery; and the weight of evil against which we have to contend is increasing like the letting out of water. It is no time for the idleness of metaphysics, or the entertainment of the arts. The blasphemies of the earth are sounding louder and its miseries heaped heavier every day: and if, in the midst of the exertion which every good man is called upon to put forth for their repression or relief, it is lawful to ask for a thought for a moment, for a lifting of the finger, in any direction but that of the immediate and overwhelming need, it is at least incumbent upon us to approach the questions on which we would engage him in the spirit which has become the habit of his mind, and in the hope that neither his zeal nor his usefulness may be checked by the withdrawal of an hour, which has shown him how even those things which seemed mechanical, indifferent, or contemptible depend for their perfection upon the acknowledgement of the principles of faith, truth and obedience, for which it has become the occupation of his life to contend.

It is scarcely too much to say that this amounts to a confession of prejudice. It is one thing to investigate art by the light of a profound understanding of human nature, and find that its significance for men is that it tends to make them moral; it is another thing to start with the intention of making men moral, and then enter upon an investigation of art with the determination that it shall conduce to that end. Ruskin's desire to make art a means to morals was so intense that it spoiled the simplicity and accuracy of his insight

into its ethical power. He did not approach the subject with a single and impartial mind. He set to work to collect and enumerate all the methods by which a picture could make an ethical suggestion. He applied himself to the detection of possibilities of moral influence with the ingenuity and the concentration of a Sherlock Holmes. The result was that he lost his sense of the supremacy of the main aim of art, and magnified the importance of minor incidents which form little part of its real concern.

But Ruskin's desire to reform men's lives was not the only cause of his looking upon art as the handmaid of morals. There can be no doubt that the tendency was in great measure fostered by his own practice of painting. The great moralist found in painting a channel for the exercise of patience and reverence. When he was painting he felt that he was expressing his individuality, but he did not realise that he was expressing the individuality of a moralist, not of a painter. Ruskin altogether exaggerated the connection between merit in a painting and virtue in the artist. He seems almost to have thought that you have only to stand up to an easel in a spirit of patience, reverence, and humility in order to produce a great picture. The truth of course is that the virtue must be in the subject, not in the artist. What is required of the artist is, not that he have in himself virtue, but that he be able to see it. Let us suppose that a child is sitting engaged in some mechanical occupation,—sorting bristles we will say; and let us suppose that she is shedding over the dull task all the glory of a divine humility and patience. A painter comes in, sees her beauty, and paints her. It is he that produces the work of art, not

the child. He worships and she worships also; but he alone is engaged in representing what he worships. What Ruskin really worshipped when he was outlining a tree was not the tree but the virtue of patience. It is not enough that a painter should worship; he must worship what he paints. It is conceivable that under the influence of the worship of patience a man might paint a picture having no resemblance to anything we have ever seen, but which to him mysteriously represented patience. It may be that Ruskin would have done this, and carried the power of art into new worlds altogether, if he had only been a painter by vocation.

There is a certain peculiarity of man that is often forgotten nowadays; namely, that he receives emotional and ethical impressions not only through his intellect but also through all his senses. Certain sights and sounds are pleasing and enlivening to our feelings; we do not know why; it is not necessary or possible that we should know why. The peculiar power of painting is this,—that it is able to appeal directly from the eye to the emotions. Just as there are certain scenes, so there are certain pictures which are capable of exercising and elevating our feelings, and of doing so without the intervention of the intellect. The real mission of the graphic arts is this peculiar mission, this mission which is not shared by literature or music, to appeal straight from the eye to the emotions. It is with an art as with a man; the thing that it really has to do is the thing that it alone can do.

Ruskin was so anxious to make art a means to morals that he lost sight of the importance of this. He did not indeed fail to see that beauty has nothing to do with the intellect.

Why we receive pleasure [he writes]

from some forms and colours and not from others, is no more to be asked or answered, than why we like sugar and dislike wormwood. The utmost subtlety of investigation will only lead us to ultimate instincts and principles of human nature, for which no further reason can be given than the simple will of the Deity that we should be so created If a person receiving even the noblest ideas of simple beauty be asked why he likes the object exciting them, he will not be able to give any distinct reason, nor to trace in his mind any formed thought to which he can appeal as a source of pleasure.

Ruskin did not fail to see that beauty has nothing to do with the intellect, but he did not assign its proper importance to beauty, which occupied far too small a place in his scheme of the functions of art. Nor was this surprising. It was not likely that a man who was investigating art with a view to the inculcation of cherished principles would assign overwhelming importance to that particular element about which, of its very nature, there is nothing to be said. That is what has always stood in the way of the proper recognition of the direct influence of art upon the feelings. The peculiarity of a purely emotional impression is that it altogether eludes language. Thought can be expressed in language and naturally formulates itself in language; feeling cannot be expressed in language at all. That is why the intellectual element, if there be one, in any piece of work, is such a god-send to critics; and that is why the intellect is so often dragged in to meddle with business in which it has no concern.

To appeal to the intellect was, in Ruskin's view, a far more important part of the aim of art than beauty. "Those ideas are the noblest subjects of art," he tells us, "which are the subjects of distinct intellectual perception and action, and which are therefore worthy of the name of

thoughts." He attached great importance to accurate resemblance of Nature, the evidence of power and even of labour in the artist, and the representation of facts from which the mind can read a pathetic or enlivening story.

Take [he says, in his chapter on *Greatness in Art*] one of the most perfect poems or pictures (I use the words as synonymous) which modern times have seen: the "Old Shepherd's Chief-mourner." Here the exquisite execution of the glossy and crisp hair of the dog, the bright sharp touching of the green bough beside it, the clear painting of the wood of the coffin and the folds of the blanket, are language—language clear and expressive in the highest degree. But the close pressure of the dog's breast against the wood, the convulsive clinging of the paws, which has dragged the blanket off the trestle, the total powerlessness of the head laid, close and motionless, upon its folds, the fixed and tearful fall of the eye in its utter hopelessness, the rigidity of repose which marks that there has been no motion, no change in the trance of agony since the last blow was struck on the coffin lid, the quietness and gloom of the chamber, the spectacles marking the place where the Bible was last closed, indicating how lonely has been the life, how unwatched the departure, of him who is now laid solitary in his sleep; these are all thoughts—thoughts by which the picture is separated at once from hundreds of equal merit as far as mere painting goes, by which it ranks as a work of high art, and stamps its author, not as the mere imitator of the texture of a skin or the fold of a drapery, but as the Man of Mind.

Again, we are asked to admire similar qualities in Turner's *BUILDING OF CARTHAGE*.

The principal object in the foreground is a group of children sailing toy boats. The exquisite choice of this incident, as expressive of the ruling passion which was to be the source of future greatness, in preference to the tumult of busy stone-masons, or arming soldiers, is quite as appreciable when it is told as when it is

seen, it has nothing to do with the technicalities of painting; a scratch of the pen would have conveyed the idea and spoken to the intellect as much as the elaborate realisations of colour. Such a thought as this is something far above all art; it is epic poetry of the highest order.

It was of course inevitable that a man who attached great value to such matters as these should come into conflict with painters of the modern impressionist school. It is well known to be difficult to define with precision the characteristics of impressionism; but there are one or two principles which form acknowledged articles in the impressionist creed, and some of these are that it is not the function of a picture to tell a story, that it is not the duty of the artist to copy Nature, and that details and minor gradations should often be sacrificed to the general effect, or for the sake of the more vivid expression of what is important. But perhaps the cardinal doctrine of the school is the distinction between truth of aspect and truth of fact. The impressionist tells us that the artist should paint what he sees, not what he knows to be there. What Ruskin thought upon the matter may be illustrated by a quotation from the *ELEMENTS OF DRAWING*. "It may perfectly well happen that in Nature the arrangement of boughs should be less distinct than your outline will make it, but it is better in this kind of sketch to mark the facts clearly. The temptation is always to be slovenly and careless; and the outline is like a bridle, and forces our indolence into attention and precision." The moral motive is clear enough here; one is almost reminded of Mrs. Turner's *Cautionary Stories*.

It is a curious thing that nearly all those writers upon art who most strongly praise impressionism, and

therefore decry Ruskin, agree with him on one point; and that is the very point where they might most reasonably have assailed him. They connect an ethical aim in art with an appeal to the intellect. Ruskin and his opponents were at one in this fundamental error; and differed only in their deductions from it. He, enamoured of the ethical aim, laid too much stress upon appeals to the intellect; they, seeing the triviality of appeals to the intellect, refused to acknowledge the ethical aim. If Ruskin could have been persuaded that beauty pure and simple is what above all influences ethics, he might

have seen the merit of impressionism. If the upholders of impressionism could have been persuaded that ethics demand beauty and not fact, they might have been reconciled to ethics. But they have always been imbued with the notion that a picture with a moral effect must be a picture of angels and saints and haloes. The best advice we can give to these people is to read the philosophy of Ruskin. And when they have read it they will find, not that they must accept his views on art, but that they will understand, with new clearness, what are the real grounds of their own.

LIONEL W. CLARKE.

THE MAGYAR AND HIS LAND.

My Happy Valley is not so far as the crow flies from Vienna or Buda-Pesth, and yet it is whole centuries away from the world of modern society, buried, so to speak, in the heart of the most westerly of all the Balkan States, for the Balkan States begin at Brück on the Austro-Hungarian frontier, and not at Semlin, which is over against Belgrade. "Hungary," says the young hopeful in reply to his governess, "is a bit of Austria, capital Buda-Pesth on the Danube. Chief exports corn, sugar, &c." There never was a more indefinite definition, for what is a land without inhabitants? It is the Magyar and his untraceable ancestry that make Hungary the most wonderful country in Europe.

You may ride a long summer day through virgin forest where only the deer know the tracks; you may, if you like, wander among hills whose summits never have been and never will be scaled, so steep and sheer rise the rocks; you may bury your name and your country and your history in long-forgotten villages where no civilisation has come since the Turk rode raging through the land; or you may listen in the dusk to legends of the great days when Kinizsy built his tower and Irma died for love of him, when Szigliget was yet the stoutest stronghold in Europe, and Csobancz defied Ali and all his powers. Nay, while the gipsy-girls sing of old Hungary and make you dream of troubadours, you may watch the fires gleam that are to keep off ghost and goblin, or see some white-haired patriarch bow his head to the rising sun.

And then you will pack your trunk and drive twenty, thirty miles to a tiny station on a branch line and be plunged, ere yet you have realised it, into London and modern England. But, if you want to know the Magyar as he is and as the world will know him when this present Imperial shadow has passed, you must travel, so to speak, three hundred years back, be content to drink pure wine and eat bread baked in an outdoor kiln, to drive in an ox-cart over roads as innocent of flint or gravel as the cart is innocent of springs. You arrive, let us suggest, in the late sunset of a July day. The slow white oxen with their wonderfully patient eyes and bowed heads, the very type of humility, will draw you without goad or rein straight to the little farm-house that I wot of, and there you shall be cured in the silence and clean air of my Happy Valley from all the nerve-strain and heart-sickness, diseases of body, mind, and spirit that have cursed your work-a-day world. So let me tell you a little of my Happy Valley and its inhabitants, that you may know whether it is good for your present sickness to go apart a little while and hear no more the crashing orchestras of Covent Garden, but the wild untaught crying and laughing of the Hungarian gipsy-music, caught by ear and instinct of the musician from the summer voices of field and forest, or the winter moaning that sounds so far across the snow.

And first the village is a ruin among ruins. There is not a village in all the country-side that has not

its tree-hidden church, bare walls now save where the kindly creepers cover them, to show how the Crescent dealt in its century-long riot through the land; and every ruin has its legend and its superstition, though too often its history is as buried as itself. A little way from my valley, for example, is Vazsony called Nagy the Great. *Lucus a non lucendo* you would say if you could see it, for it is but a little place, whose low white houses cling lovingly to the wooded hill-side, dominated by the ruined tower of Kinizsy the Miller. Perhaps the most famous miller in history was he, for he doffed the white cap to take a warrior's helmet, and put off his helmet only to don a coronet. You can see him and his wife above the door of the church he built offering their coronets to our Lady of Victory. To prove the tale, they show still the mill where he worked, sunken indeed to the low estate of a rubbish cellar, but the mill beyond doubt which sent him out once on a day to be Turco-Martel, the Hammer of the Turks. He was a hammer of the Czechs and Croats too if the truth were told, but nowadays you must not remember those details.

They told me the story one clear evening of June as we sat on the ruined ramparts of his castle and watched the smoke curl, as it did four centuries ago, through the window of the dwelling-place destitute as ever of chimneys. The scene was the Kinizsy bridge yonder, one of those places where once in a year you get such a dramatic effect as only the Great Dramatist can produce. Just at that moment, when the harvest-moon is at its fullest, the clear cold light shines on the white stone of the tower as on driven snow, while the western face is blood-red in the after-glow of the sunset. Slowly the colours develope and fade.

The silver is changed as by some alchemist into a pale gold, but the glorious colours of the west mingle with it and modify it till the white road is such a miracle of mosaic that you wonder if it is indeed Nature and not the very climax of theatric art. The crimson merges into purple and the purple into violet, and all along the valley the glint of the moon marks a marvellous line upon the stream, on whose banks the dark straight poplars guide the eye on and on into the sunset. And in the last gleam of such a sunset, spent with his long ride King Matthias, the Raven-Knight, rode with a handful of his Black Horsemen across the bridge.

"Wine!" he cried. "Who will give me a cup of wine?" It was a natural enough cry, and the modern traveller will be as welcome to use the words as ever was the King, for there is no peasant in this land of vines who has not his cask of vintage stored in some cool cellar. Moreover, the first and often the last article of the Magyar creed is hospitality, and he has nothing of Arpad in his veins who will not give a cup of wine to the thirsty pilgrim. The Miller hastened to fulfil the King's command, and brought him wine, and good wine, for next to Tokay the wine of Badacson has always been the best in Hungary; but the Miller served it as 'twas never served before or since. He took the mill-stone from its place and set on it a jar of wine, like those of Cana in Galilee, and raising all above his head so offered it to the King. "The miller's flagon, Sire," said he, "and on the miller's salver." "By Heaven," replied the King, "by Heaven, this miller is the mightiest man in my kingdom!" "Save one, Sire," said the Miller. "In my hand is the stone and the flagon; in the King's hand is the

millers too!" And he got upon a horse and rode out with Matthias, eastward to the wars. And this tower of Kinizsy and all the land about Vazsony were the King's present to his miller, whom he made Captain and Prince and to whom he gave the fairest and noblest lady in the land.

But not all the ruins hereabout have such legends attached to them. Just visible from the Kinizsy-Turm is the Barati convent in its little circle of oak and pine, the Gothic cloister which was built for Irma the peasant-woman whom Kinizsy forgot when he went to serve the King. As Matthias rode away a peasant-girl craved a favour of him, and he, dreaming no doubt of largesse, lightly granted it before she asked; but Irma, as her name was, begged only that when Kinizsy's service was done he should come back to Vazsony and to her. The King smiled, and gave Irma a ring bidding her send it when peace was in the land, and if Kinizsy were alive he should return that day. Now on the day that peace was in the land, the self-same day that Kinizsy got his bride, did Irma send the ring. There was little choice for Matthias, for then and since then an oath is binding in Hungary as much as that crimson bond of blood-brothership which binds man to man in all the Balkan world. So Kinizsy, to save the King's oath, came back with his bride post-haste to Vazsony and coming to the little cottage where Irma lived, the young bride went in alone; only to return some few short minutes later crying for very sympathy. The peasant-woman had asked neither reward nor recognition, only that a place might be built for her where she could live alone always and look out morning and evening toward the castle and pray for her sometime lover and his bride. And the Princess said:

"'Bitter' is your name and bitter your inheritance, yet will I build you a convent which shall be the grave of bitterness." Now the peasants call the Barati ruin the "Grave of Bitterness (*Keseruseg Sirja*)" to this day.

I would not question the truth or possibility of the story (you know how a name may beget a legend), for the village maidens still go sometimes on a summer evening to the ruins of that beautiful chapel, and talk softly of Irma; and it is much better to leave such feelings of reverence undisturbed, since in spite of the three churches and four creeds the reverence of my Happy Valley stops, alas, short at saints and heroes. Superstitions they have in abundance, and you mark the best Christian of them all shudder a little when the Tree-spirit lights his fires in the marshes, or the curious mirage sits in the steaming heat of the sky. Sun-worship, too, they have not quite forgotten, and it is curious to note the mixture of Christianity and Paganism which prompts the good Catholics to cross themselves when a shadow passes athwart the sunshine. I knew a little Magyar maiden who sought at midnight for the herbs to make a potion, though whether a love-potion or other I cannot say for she would never tell me; perhaps she sought fern-seed to walk invisible. She needs no more potions, poor little soul, for she died of a fever that was brought on by drinking bad water in one of the mountain villages. Almost the last thing she told me before she went to that village, was one of those jests of the Miller that the people still cherish. The King wished him once to undertake a journey to Turkey itself as his ambassador. "But they will never respect a flag of truce that I carry," said Kinizsy, "for I have done them too much harm." "If they touch a

hair of you," replied the King, "I will have a life for every hair, and if they kill you I will make you a sepulchre of their heads." "Small benefit to me, Sire," retorted the Miller, "if none of their heads chance to fit my body."

But Mariska has gone, and I shall hear no more of the Kinizsy legends that she loved.

Customs linger long in these quiet places of the earth, and little progress or development marks the valley. A recent fire drove many of my friends to camp in the open fields, but it did not teach them to rebuild their houses more securely. Along the cracked and burnt walls they are erecting little piles of brick which will support the wooden beams of the roof, and the interstices will be filled in with rough-cast and mud; a good smoky fire will soon restore the homeliness of the interior as the whitewash colours in harmony with the rest of the cottage. The Magyar peasant has very little to lose in the way of chattels, and he does not trouble himself too much when misfortune comes, for it comes too often to be any new thing to him. Year by year he is being ousted by the Germans, Slovaks, Poles and so forth, whom the alien proprietors, Jews for the most part, are bringing into the country; there is a flitting from all the country-side now, for year by year the Magyar finds less and less inheritance in David, and goes away to America and the rich harvest-lands of the New World.

The saddest sign of this decay is the little village of Leanyfalu, just an evening's stroll across the hill. The Village of Fair Maidens is its name but it belies it, for there are but a few beggars left in it who eke out a precarious existence by baking pots in the quaint mud-ovens, and a handful of unkempt goose-girls who must forsooth do duty for the bevy

of beauties who once gave the village its pretty name.

Hungarian names, by the way, are almost always pretty, and they fall most daintily from the tongue when once it has mastered the insidious initial-accent and the difficult vowels. Aranka (the golden girl) and Pusztaleány (heather-child) are examples, and you may find others as dainty in the graveyard on the hill. That is itself a beauty of my valley. The graves lie pell-mell among the white mulberries and the stunted oaks where the long rank grass and wealth of wild flowers flourish unchecked over them; for the most part they own but a broken wooden cross to mark them or even a low cairn of basalt stones such as the peasants point to and call Irma's grave; but they are clean-swept by the four winds of heaven, and the scent-laden breezes of the valley, and they look eastward to the rising sun. Silence reigns supreme among them save for the distant Angelus at its appointed hours, or far down the valley the bells of the white cows. Upon some of these little low wooden memorials you may note foreign names and inscriptions of German and Serb, Slav and Pole; but there stands one cross of stone that faces away from the sun and bears the inscription that it is so glad a thing to see here in the buried East: *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.* There is no record left of this one Irish woman who found her way to my Happy Valley and rests in peace. She lies unlike the others with feet not eastward toward the day, but north-west toward the forest-circled hills beyond the valley, toward Ireland and home. *Sacred to the Memory of "Sister Mary" born at Cork, Ireland, January 5th, 1814, departed this life November 9th, 1880. Blessed are the Dead which die in the*

Lord. And underneath the pedestal the Magyars have added their tribute to the stranger within their gates: "*Nyugodjek Bekeben* (Mayest thou rest in eternal peace)." That inscription tells more of the real creed of Hungary than all their parish priests can tell for them. The only resurrection to which most of them look forward is a resurrection of the kingdom and the power and the glory of Hungary under the rule of another Stephen, *Coronatus ille quem sepe-lierunt*. Only so would they admit any reality in the cry, "*Eljen a Kiraly* (Long live the King)!"

But you must not suppose that ruin and death are the watchwords of the valley. Spite of all the slow decay and quicker poverty which have been allotted to the real Magyars since King Lewis died at Mohaco, and still more since a profitless Imperialism set to work to crush the National spirit which it could not assimilate, the Magyar can be, and usually is, a very child in his ability to drown the voices of sorrow and discomfort in the music that he loves. There is no band of harvesters that goes out to work among the bearded wheat, no line of women, gay in kerchiefs of every hue, that goes out to clean the lines of maize and beet, which will not, when the long week is done, dance till dawn to the music of the gipsy-band. Now and again one of the churches keeps its name-day, or dedication-festival, and men and women that never darkened church-doors, nor ever will, assemble in the evening of the Saturday in the open shed of unhewn logs under the dim light of reeking oil-lamps to dance and dance till in the sun-shine of Sunday they crawl exhausted home to bed. There is no such dancing in all Europe as this, not in Italy nor Spain and never in England; and though you have heard Blue Hun-

garian Bands play mock-Magyar music at your favourite London restaurant, or have even seen a gay phalanx present the Hungarian dances in some ballet of the Empire in London or the Orpheum in Vienna, yet you know nothing of Magyar music or the Magyar dance till you have heard it and seen it, perhaps even danced it, at a *bucsu* or village-festival in Hungary. The most important *bucsu* is in Csinga-thal, a mining village in the next valley; for the mine-inspector holds a ball to which the elite are invited while the rank and file enjoy themselves in the great wooden shed outside. Be careful if you go there, for the Inspector's daughter has a friend who long since sought and found fortune in America, and recently she paid the friend a visit, so sometimes the English you fondly hope is an unknown tongue will provoke a hesitating but decidedly English answer. *Experto crede!* and never forget that in the most uncivilised regions of Hungary,—in the wilds of the Bakonyer wald as in the peasant cottages of Transylvania—you may by some accident hear the only international language of the world. Before dancing one must eat, and after eating one must drink. They will serve a peppered hash called *gulyas* or the red and burning *paprikahashnel* which is peculiar to the country, though sometimes in Vienna or elsewhere you get a mixture which masquerades under this name.

The genuine *gulyas* thirst may be quenched with copious draughts of the local vintage, but afterward, if your host be of some position, the long green glasses will be brought out and to the ashamed night will go up the Magyar drinking-song, the full-voiced chorus of Tokay. Probably your nationality will be quickly known and the gipsy-conductor will

beg you to whistle an English dance, while some enthusiastic Magyar calls "*Fehér Bor, Angolok* (White wine, Englishman)!" Be persuaded and do not attempt to whistle, or you will be ashamed by the quickness with which the gipsies will pick up less what you whistle than what you meant to whistle.

Then when all are well primed and some affectionate giant is seated on the floor with his arm round the neck of the first violin, who, quite accustomed to it, fiddles serenely on, when the lights in the supper-room are languishing and the table presents a wreckage of fruit-stones and empty bottles, of biscuits and broken bread, the company adjourns to the shed to dash wildly into the awful Magyar two-step, the fastest polka in the world. To rest when once caught in that whirlpool is impossible and to breathe very nearly so; the dowagers, no wallflowers but as keen as the rest, mock the efforts of the hapless stranger to keep up the pace, and still the bows scream faster across the strings. Seize any opening that is granted, clutch your partner by the arms and fight your way through the inferno of dancing maniacs to the cool night air and the blessed silence of the trees. One custom corrupts, and not even a Magyar can dance the two-step for ever; therefore there will presently be a pause, and after the pause a soft sighing music like the wind in the trees on a summer night, a music infectious and full of reminiscence of glorious moments in the moonlight on an English lawn, music like a child's laugh or a bride's kiss, intoxicating and cosmopolitan. What is it and what does it remind one of? Search a feeble musical memory, ransack it and worry brain and head to recall it and then,—

"*Angolok, Angolok, Csardas!*" The

clue is given or ever it has been found in the memory, for this is the crown and completion of the experience, the wild, wicked, lascivious and exhausting Csardas. No more of the racing two-step or of the chasing couples, only a rhythmic monstrous roll from side to side like an oily ground-swell in mid-ocean, only the untaught swing that is an inheritance of the people, only the slow surge of the voiceless couples moving no inch from their places but swinging from one arm to the other, quickening or slowing the swing as the music flows or ebbs. This is the first movement of the Csardas in its own forest-home. Suddenly, and without a note of warning modulation, the key is changed and the bows race wildly again, and the couples tightly clasped in each other's arms whirl like teetotums still without changing their ground till you turn away sick and giddy merely from watching them. Such is the second movement, and following it the violins hurl the dancers back for an instant into the old lascivious swing which melts into the third movement and wickedest of all. The women, giddy as it would seem after the second movement, fling their arms about the necks of their partners and submit to be twisted and turned this way and that in every variety of contortion till the scene presented is rather that of some Cairo hell than of a village festival in Christian Europe of the twentieth century. The heat and smell are indescribable, but although several dancers are carried fainting into the open, the survivors dance on, for this is the longest movement of all and all are consummated in the end of it. The music gives one long wail as of a rocket hurled shrieking through the void; the dancers steady themselves for one instant, and then clasp each other tight, tight, tight, and through all the room begins a

shiver, a shaking, quivering, shivering movement accompanied by the slightest possible shuffling of the feet. Yes, the end of the Csardas is the dance of the temple at Eryx, mad, monstrous, incredible!

"Let us go, let us go! In Heaven's name,—enough!"

Once in my Happy Valley I saw a cruel contrast to that Csardas. As I jumped down from my post of vantage among the musicians on their rickety platform, up the track from the village came slowly a lumbering cart drawn by its yoke of white oxen. On the seat in front sat a woman sobbing and by her side a Magyar peasant, his hat drawn down over his eyes and in his hand a thick unpolished stick. My companion looked up as she heard the wheels, and with a little cry said: "It is Mariska and her husband. They are going away from the country because the new landlord has brought Germans with him, and there is no more work now." She slipped from my side and went back to speak to the musicians, then, returning, bade me wait and listen. Slowly the unhappy cortege came up the hill and still the wild music of the Csardas came from the shed. Now they were opposite to us, and in the grey dawn I marked that the woman's face was drawn and hard. My companion, tender of heart as all her countrywomen, was softly crying. Then at last as the cart passed the musicians in the shed, in the midst of the last movement of the dance, the music broke short off, and as the dancers stopped in surprise there broke out upon the sudden silence the Hungarian sorrow-song, that terrible last chorus of the Magyar leaving home. The man buried his face in his hands, and the voices of those who had caught up the music, the long, low sobbing of the stringed instruments, were choked and silenced.

And beyond the valley, above the fir-crowned hills, glorious and golden burst the summer sun.

Recollections of Hungary must always be tinged with a certain gloom which not all the sunny skies and equally sunny temperament of the Magyars can dispel; for they have no present history, and all their past chivalry and glory seem so completely a closed volume. Under the guise of alliance they are really the vanquished subjects of Austria whose aim is to denationalise the country in order to convert it into a military granary for the support of the Imperial army. There is a fixed ground-tax which in good years swallows up a quarter of the total yield of the peasant's allotment, and in bad years exceeds that total so as to leave a heavy deficit, to be met after the following harvest besides the next year's tax.

It is not difficult in such circumstances to understand that the real Hungarians are vanishing from the land, and that the strangers who are brought in under a species of serfdom, while they occupy their dwellings and sometimes adopt their language, are no longer the sons of the land, bound by centuries of tradition and romance, as strong as religion, to respect the honourable name they bear and to cling passionately to their guaranteed rights. Complaints of the grievous taxation are made to those who will hear, but in voices that betoken a broken spirit, and a mortal hatred which, given the opportunity, would result in a massacre more to be expected of Arpad's warriors of nine hundred years ago than of the brow-beaten Magyars of to-day. *Qui vivra verra!* But here and there you may hear, as in at least one cottage of my valley, the old old legend of David, of Charlemagne, of Roland, of King Arthur, though here they

call this one hero of the hundred names St. Stephen.

Merlin—

Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn

Tho' men may wound him, that he will not die,

But pass, again to come; and then or now

Utterly smite the heathen underfoot—

For this Merlin is the voice of national hope crying that, in spite of all, Arthur or Stephen, David or Roland, is not dead but will return. For the legendary incarnation of strength and goodness which in Hungary takes the name of St. Stephen is but the representative of the national spirit and cannot be admitted dead so long as one genuine descendant of the old Magyars lives to prove it living.

Watch the people as they pass the figure of St. Stephen on the bridge. It is tawdry, old, and dilapidated, carrying in the storm-beaten face and the broken hands, that bear now a faded ring of wild flowers, no resemblance, scarcely even a memory of the great King who, like Charlemagne,

Clothed in majesty appeared

Not what men saw but what they feared,

whose strong heart and strong arm wrought for him a kingdom, founded, not like that of his forefather Arpad on violence and rapine, but on principles of equity, justice, and Christian mercy. A woman passes, carrying on her head a bundle of green maize for the oxen, but she passes with merely the stoop and conventional crossing which show that to her at least St. Stephen is no more than one of the gallery of the beatified whom her religion teaches her thus to acknowledge. She is a Croatian, one of the country which they have been trying so long to Magyarise as a set-off to

the Germanisation of Hungary, and her interest in the country depends solely on its providing her with bread and lodging. Following her, you notice the slouching Slovakian with his faded black hat and greasy coat, who passes with eyes set steadily towards the Herrschaft whence he obtains to-day his monthly corn-dole. He is one of the imported strangers who serves the alien landlord six days a week, and in harvest a seventh if the corn-bailiff sees fit, for a wage of some hundred pounds of corn a month and a little fire-wood,—life indeed and food for self and family instead of destitution, but none the less a slave's portion in all except the name. Once in a while he and his fellow serfs refuse to work on the seventh day, and then he is greeted by the shining muzzles of the police rifles and politely informed that strikes are not allowed in harvest-time. And if you do not believe that there is any hardship in his life, ask bailiff and watchman and owner why the revolvers hidden in their hip-pockets are loaded night and day. As for the Slovakian, he takes no notice of the Patron Saint in whose land he is a stranger and whose subjects his master has dispossessed. Slav and Slovak, Pole and Czech, German and Serb, they pass one by one, disdainful, forgetful, or lightly acquiescing in the hollow beatification which their religion has conferred. Last comes a wicker cart drawn by two white oxen, but the driver stops as he reaches the bridge, and without movement of hand or hat acknowledges by his silence the eternal hope that is in him that his King Arthur will return and that soon. Mark him and mark him well! For this is Arpad and the son of Arpad, a poor owner now of some small tract of moorland from which he forces a hard subsistence, but once through his ancestors master

of many servants and lord of goodly castles, the heroic defender of Szigliget and Czobancz.

But that a real Magyar resurrection can take place one may well doubt, seeing that the Magyar is a rover by ancestry and by every inherited tendency, so that the probability of his ever making a good farmer is very slight. The whole history of the nation is a history of ceaseless movement or ceaseless fighting, the very history of the sea surging up to swallow new land or recover lost possessions and as often retiring baffled. The inheritance of the Magyar is the sword, and his spirit is essentially that of the inquisitive explorer, desiring not to confirm a conquest won or to secure an inherited possession but to push on, like Ulysses,

Beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

That is the feeling of the Magyar, even as it is the spirit of this my valley. But the desire for new experience is most prominent to-day not in the emigrant tendency which is more compulsory than voluntary, but in the gambling spirit which possesses the people. It is not true that they are covetous gamblers. The real Magyar very rarely gambles for love of the game, but chiefly for the excitement of looking at his cards or more often at the little slip of paper which carries the fortune of the evening. Few evenings in the valley pass without some tombola or other lottery being organised, and the risk and the prizes are alike exiguous, for the chief gain goes to the Jewish publican or *vendeglo*-keeper who lends his room and sells the drink, and frequently presents the prize. They will sit for hours sometimes counting the numbers on the little slips of

paper which they draw, and in the end one of them will triumphantly present his fair companion with the great prize of the evening, a basket of red roses. But the gambling evenings are not always so harmless; only a little time ago the green hill-side received another guest, who fell at the hand of his best friend in a quarrel provoked by this same lotto-game.

Also the gambling spirit brought the Turks into Szigliget, if one may trust the legend that is told. Hear it here, on the rough parapet of Kinizsy's rampart, and judge if gambling even for worthless stakes is always without danger.

Szigliget is, or was, since very little remains, a strong fortress built on an absolutely precipitous rock and commanding the only route which at that time led through the marshes along the shores of the lake and so up into the Tapolcza valley. Strictly speaking it was a worthless position, for the route it commanded is even now a mere track very little used except by peasants and a few visitors, and the Turks might quite well have left it alone. However, they made up their minds to reduce all the fortress in the Tapolcza pass and valley, and accordingly assembled a goodly force in the broad and rich fields between Csobancz and Tapolcza. It was the principle on which Alexander spent so long a time in reducing Tyre, namely that of leaving no *point d'appui* in rear of his advance. The Turks, then, spent most of a hot summer in destroying corn and vines and fruit-trees and in burning and demolishing villages, churches, and when possible castles, making an occasional prisoner or cutting off an expedition from one of the strongholds and putting their captives to death with the most ghastly tortures.—They show at Gulacs—but there, what need to write it! Read the

Armenian reports and the atrocities of the Kurds, and substitute the Balkan districts for the names concerned. Late in the autumn Szigliget opened its huge iron portcullis to admit a riding-party who, losing their way from somewhere near St. Gyorgy, arrived on a dark night, having just escaped the clutches of a Turkish patrol. There were three gentlemen and two ladies with some armed servants in the party, the gentlemen being the Bishop of Veszprem, the Abbot of Zinz, and General Dubcsó, and the ladies Lady Fekete and a nun, who were proceeding under escort to the fortified cloister of Vazsony. Count Falva, then holding Szigliget, welcomed the addition to his fighting force which the retinue gave, but was sorely put to it to show a brave face when the ladies entered the sloping courtyard. Never a big place, Szigliget was at this time filled to its capacity with the squires and their armed retainers who had fled from the lake district, and in the existing condition of things in the fortress, the presence of women-folk was very little desired by them, more especially as they brought extra mouths to feed without a corresponding increase of the fighting, or rather foraging, strength of the garrisons. However in the end they settled down fairly comfortably, and some of the men found that ladies' fingers are no bad substitute for rough and steel-hardened hands when wounds are got in roving expeditions; in fact Count Falva and General Dubcsó had both of them cause to congratulate themselves on this account before the month was well out.

October brought a closer investment, for some of the Turkish troops moved down to Badacson and Gulacs, so that there remained only the useless road westwards across the marsh. And now the rain began to fall in

torrents, and the inmates were driven to such recreations as they could devise within walls. A sort of ring-quoits was the favourite game, played with leaden discs which were thrown on to wooden pegs stuck into the mortar of the wall. Of course bets were made on the players and on the game, and the ruder spirits compelled the poor nun to join the company. Lady Fekete, a pretty and, for her time, an accomplished woman, set the example of gaiety in spite of circumstances, for Hungarian women were not, and are not, averse to joining their male companions in any amusement that may be toward; indeed Lady Fekete is said to have been as good a hand at the wine-cup as are some of her less distinguished sisters of to-day. Suffice it, however, that near the end of a stormy day, which had vacillated between sun and shower and closed with a terrific and unseasonable thunder-storm, a game of quoits had been not long in progress during a dry interval when someone suggested that Lady Fekete should call the stakes by which all the players must abide. Now long companionship with a pretty woman in a semi-beleaguered fortress has almost inevitable results, and some spirit of mischief caused Lady Fekete to offer as the prize of one game, one kiss from her perfect lips. It needs only to add that the General who had assumed the military command and Count Falva, the dispossessed, were rivals both for the prize and for my lady's favour, and the constant reader of legend and romance will know that, towards nightfall when the wine was red, the inevitable quarrel took place between the rivals. In the true spirit of medieval chivalry which, we are apt to forget, was not a monopoly of the males, Lady Fekete intervened to prevent bloodshed in a manner transpontine, no doubt, but

probably historic. Dazed, perhaps, by excitement, but certainly raised to the last pitch of recklessness by the glowing Magyar blood within her, the most excitable blood in the world, she threw her jewelled ring on the table exclaiming: "Leave your silly squabbles over nothing. There is something to struggle for, or rather play for, for who wins the first game to-morrow wins that ring, and wins its owner too if he can fit it again on her finger!" Then woman-like she went to her room and, growing calm, prayed that the winner might be Count Falva.

Count Falva lost, and in the evening the General came to claim his reward, but Lady Fekete put her hands behind her back and answered: "Claim it twelve hours hence, and if you can fulfil my condition then I will grant your claim."

The Magyar repents his impetuosity so soon as his blood grows cool, and my lady had tossed and turned the long night through worrying and wondering what she should do if the event should prove, as she feared, unfortunate for her.

Now the oath of a Magyar is more sacred than the most solemn covenant, but like other people, if there is a gap betwixt the letters, he will in the last resort slip through it. This lady of high lineage was the last to deny her obligation, and therefore the promise must be fulfilled and the prize awarded unless it were impossible. "Claim it a few hours hence," said she, well knowing that a few hours hence she meant that it should be impossible.

There was no moon when she set about her hazardous enterprise, only a light drizzling rain, cold and irritating, which made all the more welcome the cup of warm spiced wine which she sent to the guards at the gate, "Lest they fall sick in this

weather and then are we without their defence." At midnight she left her room and slipping quietly through the low dining-hall made her way down the narrow, rock-cut stairway to the inner guard that looks northward, the only accessible face of Szigliget. Yet two hours must pass before the guard would be changed, and the present guards slept heavily beside the low iron gate that gave admittance to the Knight's Way, a subterranean water-way through the rock to the bottom of the cliff where the dripping water had made stalactites of wonderful form all down the slippery passage. Lady Fekete gently loosed the key from the waistband of the captain of the watch, greased it and opened the gate, but as she did so a noise behind warned her that someone was afoot, and forthwith she sped lightly down the passage, and opening the further gate which is hidden in thick undergrowth she fled hurriedly into the darkness, not marking the lean watcher who, from his crouching position among the rank reeds in the ditch, sprang suddenly up as she vanished and gave the sharp low call of the magpie. Lady Fekete had fled from Szigliget and left the gates of the Knight's passage open.

There is but one consolation and that is that though she reached Csobancz in safety, that fortress was compelled to capitulate a month later for want of water and the Turks, having given a safe conduct to all, waylaid them in the valley of Kapoles and slew them all, as they had slain every one of the garrison of Szigliget. I said that the prize offered for that gambling-game in Szigliget was worthless, and I do not think that the epithet will be disputed.

But do you suppose that my simple friends will profit by the morals of their own legends? Not a whit, I

assure you, for the simplest people are the last to learn even by personal experience. Ask Doctor Schwarz, yon cheery and good-natured fellow who is standing by his little green gate. Over and over again the marsh-fever, or that deadly typhoid, has carried off the strongest of them because they will not attend to his prescriptions or observe the most elementary rules of health, and the reason you may seek in the little old cottage at the end of the village. There lives a mightier power as they think than all the science in the world, just a harmless woman, old and wrinkled, and yet the ruler of ten thousand spirits who must obey her will. Charm and amulet these people have not known, but they trust to this ancient prayer-woman, or *javasassony*, as they call her, whose invocations bring disease and disaster and whose invocations alone can remove it. The churches may ring their bells and science may plead by pamphlets, but so long as the people remain distrustful of all other influence, remain uneducated by that gentle but persistent doctrine which has overcome England, so long will the Witch of Vazsony remain a power in the land. I know an old prayer-man, too, who lives at Veszprem under the very shadow of the bishop's palace and wields ten thousand times more

influence among the poor than will ever that impossible conjunction of territorial wealth and ecclesiastical dignity whose privilege it is to set the crown on the King's head. The Litany of the Hungarian peasants is addressed not to the Throne of Grace but to the humble representative of the powers of the earth and of the air. Against the Tree-spirit and against the lightning, against sickness and disaster, they equally implore her aid; and for the exercise of this supernatural power they pay her two mites which make one farthing!

Mayhap you have slept peacefully in my green and beautiful valley while my peasant-friends have told you their griefs, their legends, and their superstitions; mayhap you have listened and caught some echo of the spirit of the land, and it may even be that you will be willing to brave again the long and tiring journey to the Happy Valley. I can but assure you that if, and when, you come young and old will greet you with that most beautiful Hungarian greeting, "*Isten Hozott*" (The Lord has brought you here)." Come! The black thoroughbreds are harnessed to do you this last honour. The harvest-moon shines gloriously down the path between the chestnut-trees, and it is time to say good-bye.

C. TOWER.

Veszprem, Hungary.

OUR FATHERS WHO BORE US.

It was a fine evening in the summer of 18—. The sun was sinking behind the lofty range of B—shire Downs, and gilding with its last rays the ancient towers of F— Abbey. On a slight eminence in the vicinage of the town Miss Arabella S— was seated at an easel, endeavouring to catch the fleeting tints of the sunset, when a young man of genteel appearance made his approach.

"Miss S— by all that's unexpected!" he cried, raising his hat and holding out his delicate, jewelled hand.

"Lord B—? Impossible!" exclaimed the startled artist, as she returned his greeting. "They told me you were at the county ball at W—, with Colonel C— and Lady B—."

"How could I be at W— when F— contains my adorable enchantress?" said his Lordship in low tremulous tones. "Surely Miss S— cannot expect to remain hidden in so fashionable a resort as F—?"

"Pray leave me, Lord B—," the young lady entreated with agitation. "You know not the perils in which your presence may involve us. Think of your vows to Heaven and your promise to Miss C—! Think of your enemies at O—!"

"Well, I'm dashed!" I exclaimed with feeble humour as I rose to replace the dusty volume of MORAL MISCELLANIES in my grandmother's bookshelves. "We have certainly changed all that, even if we are decadents. What was her period, late Georgian or very early Victorian? Probably the former. Anonymous? No: *By Miss Fanny Mordaunt, Authoress of THE EARL'S INHERITANCE*. Thank Heaven we no longer invest our characters and localities with the cheap mystery of capitals and dashes, as if we were printers' devils! Ah, *A Story founded on Fact*, in a footnote. That was their notion of

realism; I wonder what they'd say to ours."

I have never liked old libraries, and in fact prefer to get my extraneous books from modern public collections, in spite of fines and the proletarian thumb. Your ancient literary catacomb smells of mummies, and is apt to nourish ghosts. I had hardly returned the MORAL MISCELLANIES than, glancing across the room, I beheld a lady of strange aspect gazing at me with dignified but ominous interest. She exhibited the high waist, puffed sleeves, white cap, and ear-submerging locks, of what we may call the middle-distance of the past. Her feet were encased in slippers (laced over the instep); her face was of an agreeable colour; her teeth were excellent, and her eyes vivid but charged with potential fire. I stared open-mouthed, impolitely perhaps, but not unnaturally.

"Whatever improvements you may have accomplished in the art of novel-writing," the lady began, speaking with a clear but slightly old-fashioned enunciation, "your manners are gone sadly retrograde."

"Pardon me, Madam," I entreated, making a profound obeisance. "Allow me to offer you a chair."

I drew an old piece of Sheraton from an alcove, and she seated herself.

"You do your best," she said; "but the old genteel air is quite gone out. You are amateurish, like a shopkeeper aping a gentleman."

I flushed at the insult; it was plain that the lady was incensed. "I regret that I am without the

masculine graces of your age," I said, "but we have no time now for their cultivation."

"I should imagine not," she answered tartly. "Well," she continued with a sigh, "as you did not know the old manner you can't be expected to feel its loss; but it conferred a distinction which I perceive now to be wholly lacking. In my day it took three generations to make a gentleman; now I hear they are turned out to order, like a pair of bespoke boots."

Immensely confused, for never before had my deficiencies been hurled in my teeth with such brutality, I floundered for vindications of my epoch; but my critic resumed: "So you object to what you call my realism, or rather want of it? I suppose you would have written everything out in full: 'Miss Seymour,' 'Lord Bartizan,' 'Funnell Abbey,' 'Colonel Clash,' and 'Lady Horbury'?"

I staggered: plainly this was Miss Mordaunt herself, and I had put my foot in it with a vengeance. But my first words did not mend matters. "Eavesdroppers rarely hear good of themselves," I said hastily.

"Eavesdroppers, indeed!" the spectral authoress exclaimed with contempt. "It is you that are the eavesdropper. This library is my prescriptive haunt; it is one of the few yet remaining in the country in which my once famous and fashionable novels are preserved. There they are, above your head."

I looked up. There, in musty leather backs, stood a round dozen of them, from *THE EARL'S INHERITANCE* and *MISALLIANCE* to *HIGH LIFE TO-DAY* and *THE NEW DEMI-MONDE*. I had never observed them before.

"But your criticism is grossly unfair as well as impertinent," the lady went on, extracting a delicate vinaigrette from a small bag hung on her

wrist, and applying it to her nose. "The tale which you have censured was written when I was a mere chit, and it can hardly be expected to display the finish of my mature genius. Allow me to inform you that I was the rival of Mrs. Gore and Lady Blessington; I was admired by the splendid d'Orsay, read by the young D'Israeli and Bulwer, and quoted by the American exquisite, N. P. Willis. But what might you be, if I may enquire? A publisher, I should think from the freedom of your strictures."

I assured her that no such good fortune was mine.

"An editor, possibly?" she asked, with evident distrust.

Even that tempered felicity was not my share.

"Ah, I see, you are a critic!" she exclaimed, after a glance at my somewhat careless attire,—I always wear old clothes when at work, especially in libraries. "Now it's explained. You are one of that miserable Grub Street tribe who, having failed ignominiously in the higher walks of literature, fall foul of their more gifted and more fortunate rivals. I perceive that the times are not really changed, after all."

To be shut up in the dusky library of an old country-house with the ghost of a once popular but long dethroned lady novelist, is not a cheerful experience. Dreading to think what extremities she might resort to if not placated, I essayed the task of conciliation with all haste.

"Madam," I said in my most agreeable tones, "when I have read your delightful romances, as I shall be vastly pleased to do now I have met you, criticism will exhale in admiration." I drew my bow at a venture, but my arrow hit the mark.

"We did not say *vastly pleased* in my time," she corrected, smiling.

"I beg your pardon," I began.

"It is plain," she went on, "that you take me for my Christian-name-sake of the eighteenth century, Fanny Burney, who depicted fashionable life in the later years of Dr. Johnson and his associates; but my chief vogue was in the Regency. I was, in fact, one of the founders of your nineteenth century school of fashionable fiction."

I was more rejoiced at her sudden amiability than at the information, for a vindictive ghost may prove a dangerous neighbour. She now looked at me with curious enquiry. "I hear that short tales are now very much in the fashion," she said, "and that periodical publications are surprisingly increased. I hear also that illustration by means of engravings and woodcuts has become enormously popular."

In this field I was more at home, and gave her a succinct and roseate account of the growth of the *storyette* and the current picture-magazine. The short story, I assured her, was one of the triumphs of the age. I applauded its pith and point, its champagne-like effervescence, its coruscation, its mosaic finish and completeness, its realism. Had she heard of our latest discovery in physical science, radium? Well, the modern short story might be called the radium of fiction, if she would excuse a heated and ebullient metaphor. I exaggerated the truth, no doubt, but I was unnerved and shaken by my unusual experience. It was satisfactory, however, to observe that the lady seemed deeply interested, though smiling at my enthusiasm.

"I suppose you refer to those slight narrative compositions that fill only a score or two of pages in a book or a periodical," she said thoughtfully, "like the MORAL TALES of my older contemporary, Miss Edgeworth?"

"Madam," I said, "so far from filling the space you mention they are frequently compressed into a single page, and occasionally into half a page."

I could have sworn that my ghostly interlocutor said "La!" in spite of her high breeding; but her curiosity was plainly stimulated. Her good-humour, also, was now complete, and our talk flowed smoothly.

"The defects you were pleased to notice in my youthful performance," she said, again sniffing at her vinaigrette, "were common to amateur novelists in my time. Perhaps it was thought more genteel to disguise familiar places and titles by using only their initials; but it doubtless implied a culpable poverty of invention. When I had made my *début* as a portrayer of fashionable manners and morals I abandoned the practice, as you will see when you peruse my later works."

"Of course," I hastened to say, "we all have to serve our apprenticeship."

"But," she continued with some appearance of diffidence, "you made use of the term *realism*, one which was not commonly in vogue with my contemporaries, though its meaning seems tolerably clear. Mr. Wordsworth professed to have introduced it in poetical compositions, which as you are aware were once popular; and Mr. Dickens, who was beginning to write when I was disembodied, adopted the practice in his descriptions of low life; but I gathered from your recent remarks that you have made some advance even upon their methods."

"My dear Madam," I said with excitement, "they hadn't really grasped the idea. At least Wordsworth hadn't, in spite of all his Betty Foyes and Alice Fells. Dickens, of course, went farther, but even he did not go beyond verisimilitude. The

truth is that genuine, out-and-out realism is the invention or the discovery of our own age, like the short story." I spoke with force.

"Surely you do not present low life as it really is? the lady asked with a slight shudder. "I presume you drape it in some sort of glamour or sentiment of romance."

"Not a bit; we gave up the drapery business decades ago," I answered smartly. "Our canons now prescribe actuality; we are photographic or nothing; we hold up the mirror to life as it is, and never soften the picture. Only thus can the true form and pressure of the time be shown."

If I was a little rhetorical, my nerves were still far from steady. My listener put on an offended air. "Am I to understand, Sir, that *we* did not hold up the mirror with equal fidelity," she said; "and that *our* depiction of life and character was false because we acted on the old maxim that Art improves Nature?"

"Oh," I proclaimed recklessly, "it is notorious that the late Georgian novelists, especially the fashionable ones, were stilted and artificial. Compare them with those of our time, A—, B—, and C—, for instance [here I named several of my most popular contemporaries and rivals], particularly in the matter of their dialogues."

"Sir!" the lady cried with flashing eyes, "do you mean that I—"

"Present company always excepted," I reminded her in haste, feeling myself grow pale.

She laughed merrily at my alarm, a rippling human cachination. "It is evident that you are all wonderfully proud of your skill in dishing up the talk and manners of the alley,—*gutter-broth* it was called in my day—and that of uncouth peasants and artizans," she said, again restoring

herself with smelling-salts. "But I can assure you it is no discovery of your age. We could do it quite as effectively when we chose, only our taste forbade too great intimacy with the lives and habits of low persons. But, as you say, you have changed all that. To show you, however, that your vaunted realism is in no degree better than ours, and nothing new, I will read you an extract from my moral friend and acquaintance, Miss Edgeworth."

She had secured the volume and regained her seat before I could move. Then, after another sarcastic reference to my defective gallantry, she read the well-known apology of the Dublin shoeblack for murdering his mate:—

"Why, my lard, as I was going pas the Royal Exchange I meets Billy. 'Billy,' says I, 'will you sky a copper?' 'Done,' says he. 'Done,' says I, and done and done's enough between two jantlemen. with that I ranged them fair and even. With my hook-em-snivy—up they go—'Music!' says he—'Scull!' says I, and down they come three brown mazzards. 'By the holy you fleshed 'em,' says he. 'You lie,' says I. With that he ups with a lump of a two-year-old and lets drive at me. I out's with my bread-earner, and gives it him up to Lamphrey in the bread-basket."

"There is your low life done to a T.! And now I will select another specimen of a less murderous and more amusing kind," she continued, possessing herself of a second book. "It is from my once popular Scottish contemporary, Miss Ferrier; she is discoursing in a language now I am told very much in the vogue, and in the character of an old gentlewoman of her day.

"Hae, bairn—tak a cookie—tak it up—what are you feared for? it'll no bite ye. Here's t'ye, Glenfern, an' your wife an' your wean; puir tead, it's no had a very chancy ootset, weel a wat. Canna

ye sit still a wee, man, an' let me speer after my auld freens at Glenfern? Hoo's Grizzy, an' Jacky, an' Nicky? aye warkin' awa at the peels an' the drogs—he, he! I ne'er swallowed a peel nor gied a doir for drogs a' my days, an' see an ony o' them'll rin a race wi' me when they're naur five score."

"Here," she said, "is the beginning of your famous Kailyard School, and considerably more vigorous in its infancy than in its old age."

I was astonished at the skill of her attack, which had something almost Japanese in its agility; but my protests of unfairness were only half-framed when she darted to a shelf of ancient newspapers, and withdrew an old Gazette of the First Gentleman's reign, her own most prolific period. "Here," she said, on once more regaining her seat, "is an example of the light table-talk of a man of genius and world-wide fame, hit off to the life. I trust you will find it neither stilted nor artificial. But although published in my own time it refers to an incident seventy years earlier, a breakfast-meeting with the great composer, Handel. That glorious musician (to whom you owe the MESSIAH, the DEAD MARCH, and other immortal pieces) having slept supperless by his physician's command, crosses the Thames to his friend Mr. Zachary Hardcastle in the Temple, and is moved to admiration by the sight of food:—

"Upon my word, that is a picture of a ham!" he exclaims to the assembled company, which includes the poet, Colley Cibber, and certain famous fellow-musicians. "It is very bold of me to come and break my fast with you uninvited, and I have brought along with me a notable appetite; for the water of old Father Thames, is it not a fine bracer of the appetite?"

"Pray, did you come with oars or scullers, Mr. Handel?" asks one of the famous musicians.

"How can you demand of me that

silly question, Dr. Pepusch?" answers Handel, in his German-English. "What can it concern you whether I have one waterman or two watermans, whether I pay one shilling or two? *Diavolo!* I cannot go here, I cannot go there, but someone shall send it to some newspaper, as how Mr. George Frederick Handel did go sometimes last week to break his fast with Mr. Zac. Hardcastle; but it shall be my fault if it shall be put in print whether I was rowed by one waterman or by two watermans."

"In conclusion," said my instructress, "I can only give you his lively outburst on his former professional associates and enemies, for the account though vivid is of some length."

"Gustus," he cries to an old friend at the table, "do you not remember as it was almost only of yesterday, that she-devil, Cuzzoni, and that other precious daughter of iniquity, Beelzebub's spoiled child, the pretty-faced Faustina? O! the mad rage that I have to answer for, what with one and the other of these fine ladies' airs and graces. Again, do you not remember that upstart puppy, Senesino, and the coxcomb, Farinelli? Next, again, my sometime notable rival, Master Bononcini, and old Porpora? Ha, ha, ha! all at war with me, and all at war with themselves. Such a confusion of rivalships, and double-facedness, and hypocrisy, and malice, that would make a comical subject for a poem in rhymes, or a piece for the stage, as I hope to be saved!"

She laughed again as she ended. It is impossible for me to describe her admirable rendering of these extracts; despite a somewhat obsolete pronunciation, it was the revelation of an art long perished, like the proper reading of poetry.

"I could find you thirty more on the same shelf," she said; "and yet you suppose realism to be the invention of your own age!"

I swelled angrily with objections. These were mere exotic instances, oases in a desert, exceptions that

proved the rule. But she waived me aside.

"You wondered," she said, "in your facetious censure of my poor amateur tale, what we Georgians thought of your modern realism, and I will tell you. I have read many of the pieces in your new picture-magazines, and know what it is,—it is like the old Dutch paintings, all detail and no real life. This will surprise you, for you think it is all life; but my censure is just, for life is feeling, and your realism is without real feeling. The old ponderous moral critics of our time used to complain that we were *blasé*, sophisticated, artificial, worn-out; but even the most hardened and affected of us,—even the graceless wits and dandies of the Regency—had feelings, emotions, passions, loves, and hopes and fears, that could not always be hidden. We had sentiment and sensibility; words that you Edwardians have no occasion for, for the real things are dead. You are clever, minute, painful; you have the corruscation that you love; but you,—and your young ladies that play hockey and golf—have about as much feeling as an iron kettle, or one of your big locomotives, or—"

"Madam," I interrupted sharply, "you generalise without the facts, and with prejudice. Give me concrete examples, modern instances." I was irritated and careless of her ire.

"Here is one," she said, taking a recent magazine from the table beside her. "It is a short story of an intrigue among people whom I infer from their conversation to be bargees or ship-chandlers, by one Reginald Franey, an author who exhibits all the defects of taste and sentiment that I have named. I presume—"

This was more than I could bear, —the story was my own! It had cost me a week on Limehouse Reach, getting up the necessary local colour and profanity.

"Madam, your presumption," I began, but was stopped by a singular change in her appearance. The afternoon sun shot a ray into the hitherto shadowed corner in which she sat, and to my horror I perceived the frame of her chair and the covers of the books behind her show plainly through her person, high waist, puffed sleeves, frilled cap and all! In an instant, however, her form had dissolved into the dusty, mote-filled air through which the sunbeam ploughed its path. I stepped to the low window, and looked out; there was nothing to be seen but the old-fashioned garden, with its formal flower-beds, antique dial, and a resplendent peacock strutting on the sunny lawn. I grasped the window-ledge for support: then the tea-bell rang.

"My dear Reginald," said my grandmother, as I joined her in the drawing-room at the recuperative feast, "you are as white as a ghost and I declare as cold! You shouldn't stay so long in the library; it isn't good for your health."

"My dear grandmother," I replied as she filled my cup, "you are right. The place is haunted by all kinds of ghosts, some of them,—the female ones especially—the most infernally impudent and conceited that I ever met in my life. I should have it turned out and scrubbed with carbolic, and a brand-new installation of electric lights put in. That might teach them to mind their manners and their own business."

REGINALD FRANEY.

THE LAST INCARNATION.

*He stood upon a weedy bank, and sang
To trembling leaves and sparkles in the stream ;
And as he sang I heard his choir of selves.*

*He sang the incarnations of a soul
Freed from the clay of graves dug in the stars
And lost beneath the highways of the earth.*

*His choir of selves awoke him, and I saw
Distress upon a thin face dimly young.
The man was thinking : " If my foot had slipped. . . "*

*He had forgotten all the song I heard,
And I remember but its sense and tune,
And these few chords of triumph and despair.*

Ages have rolled o'er me. I am too old
To count my life by gravestones that are years,
To mourn my life for its frustrated plans.
Ages have rolled o'er me. I am too old.

So old am I that I have done with fears,
And when my living sins revolve in dance
Or glower with ruby eyes in heads of jet,
I laugh to think what impish armies lie
Unnoticed in the graves I occupy—
A million graves, and each an oubliette.

The eve that trembles like a voice in tears
Tells me that spring is on the world again.
The old grows young, but this thought interferes
'Twixt joy and my enjoyment. It is tolled
Knell-like from heights that scarce the clouds attain,
While the stream glories in the sun's red gold
And hidden birds sing, high on leafy spears :
Ages that now are nothing saw me old.

A new joy flashes ; and suspected pain,
Chilling the windless air like a spirit's shiver,
Wins the world's face the pathos that is man's,
And in the eyes of that forlorn outliver
Of joy whose spirit haunts the scene he scans.

The Last Incarnation.

I falter not : my voice is clear and bold,
For though all beauty shames me, I am old
And strongly calm as is the lethal river.
I, elder brother of the footworn earth,
Am wise by contact with the wise All-giver
Whose wisdom stabs like interstellar cold.

It stabbed me ; and I felt within me die,
With one acclaiming pang too fierce and brief
To be distinguished from an ecstasy,
Passion and hope, suspicion and belief.
Wisdom is mine instead : thereby I know
A force is hidden in me as seed in mould
Which shall destroy me at the shock of birth.
That force I sing to wake it. Let it grow !
And for a sign that over me have rolled
Ages that bore whole nations to and fro,
I tell you that the doom it speeds is worth,
For one thing that I know it means, all mirth
Of youth and drunkenness. I am so old.

W. H. C.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE WAR CORRESPONDENT.

THE collection of war news has been for years a special branch of journalism. There is never any lack of eager claimants for admission to its ranks,—men of daring, resource, and ability, who are attracted by the fascination of war, and by a desire to play a part, however humble, in the most awful, grim, and tragic drama enacted on the human stage. The chief qualifications for this hard and adventurous life are physical strength and mental vigour. The War Correspondent must have a frame of iron, with nerves of steel, the capacity to subsist on a meagre supply of inferior food for days in good condition, and to sleep at night in the open. He must have sound sense and rapid judgment, a quick observant eye, capable of taking in the ever-shifting scenes and changing incidents of a field of battle, and a capacity to convey his impressions readily and vividly to paper.

Henry Crabbe Robinson was probably the first War Correspondent. In 1808 he was sent by *THE TIMES* to the Peninsula as its special correspondent, to report the progress of the British Army under Sir John Moore. He landed at Corunna whence he forwarded a series of letters headed *SHORES OF THE BAY OF BISCAY*. His business, as he tells in his diary, was to collect news and forward it by every vessel that left the port. Perhaps his work would be best described as that of a Foreign Correspondent. He reported the progress of the expedition from its base at Corunna. The battle of Corunna fought on January 16th, 1809, and the death of Moore on

the field from a cannon shot, was described in *THE TIMES* by Robinson. He did not, however, actually see the engagement; but he heard the cannonading, and saw the wounded and the French prisoners brought into Corunna.

The first journalist who best answers the description of a War Correspondent as the term is now understood,—that is to say, the representative of a newspaper who accompanies an army in the field and sends his communications from the scene of hostilities,—was Charles Lewis Gruneisen, who represented *THE MORNING POST* in Spain during the Carlist War of 1837. A sub-editor in the foreign department of *THE MORNING POST* he had interested himself in the question of the succession to the Spanish Throne, and became acquainted with supporters of Don Carlos in London. In March, 1837, he was asked by the manager of *THE MORNING POST* whether he would undertake to accompany the Carlist army in their proposed march on Madrid as Correspondent. "Without a moment's hesitation," he says, "I accepted the mission and two hours sufficed to take my instructions at the office and to get my passport and I was off with the night mail from Dover." He joined the head-quarters of Don Carlos, and in the letters which he sent to his newspaper he described the battles of the campaign as an actual eye-witness.

Still, the custom of newspapers sending representatives with armies in the field, may be said to really date only from the Crimean War in

the middle of the nineteenth century. Till then the public gained its information of the progress and varying fortunes of a campaign from belated official despatches, supplemented by extracts from private letters from officers engaged in the war, which were published by the newspapers. The first War Correspondent to obtain renown was Mr. (now Sir) William Howard Russell, who represented *THE TIMES* in the Crimea; and so it has come to pass that he is popularly regarded as the first of the War Correspondents. His position with the troops, being unrecognised by the military authorities, was attended by many discomforts and inconveniences. His movements were not restricted in the slightest degree; on the contrary he had perfect freedom of action, could go where he pleased, and write what he pleased. But he was unable to procure rations for himself or forage for his horse from the provisioning department of the army. On informing the authorities in Printing House Square of his awkward position, he received a letter to the effect that the Government at home had directed the military authorities in the field to give him every possible facility. He immediately called upon Lord Raglan, the Commander-in-Chief. "I sent in my card," he writes. "Lord Raglan was very much engaged; but I was received by Colonel Steele, who listened to my request for transport and rations with an expression on his face, half of annoyance, half of amusement, and in the end informed me most courteously that there was not the smallest chance of my obtaining what I desired." Throughout the campaign, therefore, Mr. Russell had to victual and clothe himself and provide forage for his horse as best he could. A ham cost him £5, a turkey £5, a little pot of marmalade 5/-, a

pair of boots £6. But the trouble was not so much the high prices of provisions and clothing as their meagre and uncertain supply. What a queer figure he must have presented, mounted on a fiddle-headed, ewe-necked horse, dressed in all sorts of odds and ends, including a commissariat officer's cap with a broad gold band, a rifleman's patrol jacket, breeches and Blucher boots with huge brass spurs, riding here and there, as he pleased, over the field of battle. The army viewed with mingled amusement and amazement the proceedings of this newspaper man, coolly writing in his note-book while shot and shell were whizzing and bursting round him.

Archibald Forbes, of *THE DAILY NEWS*, however, was the first to see the possibilities of the telegraph in the rapid despatch of war news and to startle the breakfast-tables of the kingdom with the description of yesterday's battle. He it was, too, who recognised that it is no part of the duty of the War Correspondent to describe in detail the tactical or strategical movements of the rival forces on the field of conflict. That kind of work may very properly be left to military men in the Service magazines. What the general public look for in the newspapers is not technical records of the military operations, but bright, graphic, vivid pictures of the war; its thrilling episodes, its pathetic incidents, its glories and its disasters, with interesting narratives of personal experiences and adventures. That is exactly what Forbes supplied. What for instance, could be better, from his and his readers' point of view, than this description of the last moments of Gravelotte, when the battle was not yet lost nor won, and when the triumph of Germany was still undecided?

The strain of the crisis was sickening as we waited for the issue in a sort of rapt spasm of sombre silence. The old King sat with his back against a wall on a ladder, one end of which rested on a broken gun-carriage, the other on a dead horse. Bismarck, with an elaborate assumption of coolness which his restlessness belied, made pretence to be reading letters. The roar of the close battle swelled and deepened, till the very ground trembled beneath us. The night fell like a pall, but the blaze of an adjacent conflagration lit up the anxious group here by the churchyard wall. From out the medley of broken troops littering the slope in front rose suddenly a great shout, that grew in volume, as it rolled nearer. The hoofs of a galloping horse rattled on the causeway. A moment later Moltke, his face for once quivering with excitement, sprang from the saddle, and, running towards the King, cried out: "It is good for us; we have restored the position, and the victory is with your Majesty!" The King sprang to his feet with a fervent "God be thanked!" and then burst into tears.

The War Correspondent has often, in the discharge of his duty, to run as great a risk of being killed or wounded as any soldier in the fighting line. Forbes in the later years of his career wrote:

Before far-reaching rifled fire-arms were brought into use it was quite easy to see a battle without getting into the range of fire. But this is no longer possible, and in the future will be still more impossible. With guns of precision that carry six miles, with mobile artillery having a range of more than three miles, and with rifles that kill, without benefit of clergy, at two miles, the War Correspondent may as well stay at home with his mother unless he has hardened his heart to take his full share of the risks of the battle-field. Indeed, if he has determined to look narrowly into the turbulent heart of each successive paroxysm of the bloody struggle,—and it is only by doing this that he can now make for himself a genuine and abiding reputation—he must lay his account for enduring more risks than fall to the lot of the average soldier.

One of the finest achievements of a War Correspondent was that of Holt White, a representative of *THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE*, in the Franco-Prussian War. He witnessed the battle of Sedan from the Prussian head-quarters on Thursday, September 1st, 1870. At its conclusion he rode to Brussels, but there the post-office authorities refused to transmit his despatch to London, and even threatened to arrest him for saying that the French had been defeated. He then went on to Calais, crossed to Dover by special steamer, and took a special train to London, where he arrived at five o'clock on Saturday morning. Next day there was a description of the battle, six columns long, in *THE TRIBUNE*. It was not till Tuesday that the London newspapers had accounts of the conflict from their correspondents. But the most famous deeds of physical endurance in the race for news between War Correspondents are told of Archibald Forbes. In the Servian War of 1876, Semlin, the nearest telegraph station, was one hundred and twenty miles distant from the scene of the battle. So soon as Forbes knew the result he rode off, and all night long he kept at a gallop, changing horses every fifteen miles. At Semlin he had one long drink of beer, and then at once sat down to the task of writing, hour after hour, against time, the tidings of which he was the bearer. After he had written the story of the battle and put it on the wires, he lay down in his clothes and slept twenty hours without waking. He had witnessed the battle which lasted six hours, ridden one hundred and twenty miles, and written and despatched a telegraphic message four columns in length to *THE DAILY NEWS*, all in the space of thirty hours. During the Graeco-Turkish

War THE MORNING POST was first out with important news from the seat of war. This triumph was due to the use of the bicycle by their special correspondent Wilfred Pollock. After the decisive battle of Domoko had been won by the Turks, the Greeks made no attempt to hold their strong position at the Phourka Pass, and all the English correspondents raced to Athens, straining every nerve to be the first to despatch the important news. They were all taken by a Greek steamer to Chalcis, where they arrived at midnight. Pollock had a bicycle, and while the others were engaged in bidding against each other for the speediest means of transit, he was well on his way to Athens, which he reached over six hours in advance of his closest rivals, so that his paper had a full day's start with the news.

But reporting a war is not only arduous and hazardous work for the War Correspondent; it is also the most costly form of newspaper enterprise. Narratives of battle must nowadays be served up red hot. The method of sending home news by post, which was necessarily employed, before the advent of submarine cables, during the Crimean Campaign and the Indian Mutiny, would never satisfy the desire for speedy intelligence from the seat of war, which the existence of a network of telegraph wires covering almost the entire world has aroused in newspaper readers. The telegraphing of war news must therefore be employed on the most lavish scale. Press messages are transmitted within the United Kingdom at a charge of one shilling for seventy-five words before six o'clock in the evening, and after that hour, when the pressure of business telegrams is over, one hundred words are sent for the same sum. At the lower scale the cost of telegraphing a news-

paper column, which contains two thousand words, would be twenty shillings; but that would pay for only eleven words from Korea or Japan. Within the European telegraphic system the average charge for Press messages is fourpence or fivepence a word; it is sixpence halfpenny a word from Turkey, and sevenpence a word from Greece, and to and from America news is also cabled at the rate of fivepence a word. From South Africa the rate for ordinary messages is four shillings a word, and for Press messages one shilling and threepence a word. But during the Boer War the correspondents were so eager to be ahead of each other that they had their messages sent at the high rate so as to avoid delay, as ordinary messages take precedence of Press messages. The ordinary rate for telegraphing from Japan or Korea is seven shillings and sixpence a word; Press cables are sent for one shilling and elevenpence a word. Even with this reduction a newspaper often finds that its account for its own special news of the struggle between Russia and Japan amounts in the week to £1,000 or £1,200, irrespective of the cablegrams of the News Agencies for which it has to pay also substantial sums. Besides, there is an amount of almost inevitable waste. Some of the costly cables sent to London by zealous correspondents cannot be used for one reason or another. A striking illustration of how money may be wasted was furnished recently when the special correspondent of a London paper cabled a long message from Tokio at a cost of £200. The message was an important one, worth even this great expenditure of money, and the correspondent was perfectly justified in sending it; but the very same message had previously been issued by the Japanese Legation in

London, and consequently the £200 was literally thrown into the waste-paper basket. It will, therefore, be seen that when war breaks out in a distant part of the world, a London newspaper specially represented at the front must be prepared to spend lavishly on telegraphing alone, if it is to maintain a reputation for enterprise.

Of course, most newspapers published in the Provinces are not represented at the front by their own exclusive correspondents. They rely on the News Agencies for their war intelligence, and they obtain it by co-operation at a comparatively small cost. But the London morning papers, and the leading journals of the Provinces, are bound to be independently represented at the seat of war. Indeed, a leading paper will have six or more special correspondents scattered over the area of war, and each of these, in salary, travelling, and other personal expenses, represents an outlay of at least £2,000 a year; and when, as often happens, it is necessary to use special war-boats, a large addition is made to the expenses. During the war between America and Spain *THE NEW YORK HERALD* spent £2,000 a week on a small fleet of despatch-boats to report the progress of the conflict at sea.

The newspapers willingly incur the enormous extra expenditure which a war involves, though it brings them very little benefit in return. Every journal is content to pay anything within its resources; but in recent wars the elaborate and costly arrangements of the Press for the collection of intelligence have been rendered almost nugatory. The conditions of War Correspondents have changed entirely since the Crimean Campaign, or even since the Franco-Prussian War. In some things the change has

been for the better. The War Correspondent is now recognised by all the Powers. He is regularly attached to the army which he accompanies in the field, takes rank as an officer, is under military law, and is allowed to draw food for himself and his servant and forage for his horse from the Commissariat department. Of course he relies on his own resources, so far as possible, for his provisions and transport, and when circumstances compel him to resort to the Army Commissariat he pays for what he receives. In the Boer War the cost to the Correspondent for rations was five shilling a day for himself, four shillings for each servant, and five shillings for each horse. Undoubtedly, so far as personal comfort and convenience is concerned, the lot of the War Correspondent has been greatly improved; but, at the same time, his freedom of action in the field, his zeal and enterprise in the interest of his newspaper, his independence in describing scenes and incidents of the campaign, have been immensely restricted. A new military official, ominously called the Censor, has been invented to superintend the work of the War Correspondent. He is appointed by the General commanding at the front, and it is his duty to read, curtail, pass, or refuse to pass, any and every message, private or otherwise, to newspapers or individuals which is handed in at the field telegraph-office.

The main object of this vigilant and strict censorship of communications from the front is, of course, to prevent details which it might be undesirable to make public from coming to the knowledge of the enemy. It was impossible, of course, that the freedom of comment allowed to Mr. Russell in the Crimea should be continued to his successors. The War Correspondent cannot be, in the

nature of things, a welcome guest to the commanding officer, who naturally prefers to conduct the campaign in the dark, or at least to restrict the public knowledge of affairs to what he himself thinks fit to say in his own official despatches. Even Mr. Russell was regarded by the commanding officers in the Crimea with dislike and distrust. In his work, *THE GREAT WAR WITH RUSSIA*, he writes :

As I cleared the 80th Regiment, and was about fifty yards in front of the 55th Regiment, an officer rode out from a group and said, "General Pennefather wants to know who you are, and what you are doing here." I answered to the best of my ability ; but the aide-de-camp said, "I think you had better come and see the General yourself." And so I did. "By, —, sir," exclaimed the General, when I had told him all I knew about myself, "I'd as soon see the devil. What on earth do you know of this kind of work, and what will you do when we get into action?" "Well, General," I answered, "it is quite true I have very little acquaintance with the business, but I expect there are a great many here with no greater knowledge of it than myself." He laughed. "Bedad, you're right. You're an Irishman, I'll be bound."

The feeling that the War Correspondent is a nuisance developed in later campaigns. During the early part of General Sheridan's operations in 1864 against the Confederate forces under General Jubal Early in the Shenandoah Valley, a War Correspondent named Forrester William fell into disgrace with the Federal commander, owing to some of his outspoken comments on the campaign. After one of these articles had appeared, he met Sheridan, who remarked, "So you have been making fun of me in your — newspaper!" "Fun, General!" "Yes; you told all about those confounded ambulances and paid no sort of respect to the commander of the army in which you are suffered to live." "There

was no exaggeration in my story, sir: you must admit that." "Admit h—ll!" cried Sheridan. "This business has got to stop. You are ordered to leave my department within twenty-four hours." "Well, General, you have just been made Commander of the United States Military Department," said the Correspondent. "Even if I go back to New York, I shall still be within the lines of your command." "Oh, go to the d—ll! if you like! I don't care where you go," said Sheridan in anger. To which the Correspondent replied: "All right, General; but I am afraid I shall not be out of your department even with his Satanic Majesty." "Gentlemen, there is too much writing," said General Blumenthal to the English correspondents in the Franco-German War. "If this goes on, somebody will be shot. Will you come to breakfast, gentlemen?" This story describes, tersely and with humour, the present attitude of the military authorities everywhere towards the War Correspondent. The hospitality of the army is at his service; but he must not write.

There is a work called *THE SOLDIERS' POCKET-BOOK FOR FIELD SERVICE* which is very popular in the Army. It was written by Lord Wolseley in 1869 as a practical manual of the duties of a soldier in time of war, the books on the subject issued by the War Office being considered purely theoretical. Here is an extract from the latest edition of the book.

Travelling gentlemen, newspaper correspondents, and all that race of drones are an encumbrance to an army; they eat the rations of fighting men and do no work at all. Their numbers should be restricted as much as possible.

In pointing out the service which

spies can be made to render by spreading false news of the army in the field, Lord Wolseley also says :

The General Officer in Command should so keep his counsel that his army and even the staff round him should be not only in ignorance of his real intentions, but convinced that he aims at totally different objects from what are his true ones. Without saying so directly you can lead your army to believe anything; and as a rule in all civilised nations what is believed by the army will very soon be credited by the enemy, having reached him by means of spies, or through the medium of those newly invented curses to armies. I mean Newspaper Correspondents.

Under the heading *Use of Electric Telegraph*, Lord Wolseley, it must be acknowledged, gives unanswerable reasons, from the military point of view, for the censorship.

It is essential that all wires in the theatre of war should be in military possession, and that every telegraph office should be worked by military operators, no message being allowed over the wires from correspondents, officers or others, until it had been read and signed by the Press Censor. All important news from a seat of war is nowadays sent home by telegraph, and my experience tells me how necessary, for the sake of accuracy, if for no other reason, it is that all telegrams with news should be read over, and all sensational matter erased from them. Some men love to dwell on horrors, which, in many instances, are the creation of an imaginative brain that may be, perhaps, somewhat overwrought. It would be easy in many phases of every campaign to send home telegraphic messages that would create a panic without doing any good whatever. Not only should every telegram, but every page of it, and every correction made in it, should be signed by the Press Censor before any telegraphic operator should be authorized to send it forward.

However, Lord Wolseley recognises that so long as the British public's craze for sensational news remains as

it is now, the British General must tolerate the presence in the field of the newspaper correspondent. The following testimony to the reasonable and considerate manner in which the Censorship was exercised in his lordship's campaigns, is quoted from Mr. Henry Pearse, an experienced War Correspondent :

When Sir Garnet Wolseley wrote of war correspondents as "those curses of modern armies in the field," he was not reasoning from any actual experiences, but rather conjuring up a picture of the pass to which things might come if a whole host of correspondents were to follow troops on a campaign, and be free to telegraph under no control save that of their own sense of responsibility. To the credit of the distinguished soldier I have just mentioned, it must be said that he,—the first to impose military censorship on correspondents in a campaign—was most scrupulous in his exercise of the powers it conferred. For myself, and for others who served on Lord Wolseley's staff in the Nile Expedition, I can say, without hesitation and without fear of contradiction, that the duties of censorship then were performed with absolute impartiality and a courteous desire to free the necessary formality from everything that might well make it irksome. Comments, however unfavourable, were allowed to pass intact so long as they did not violate the ordinary rules of discretion, or convey any meaning that might be subversive of discipline. Censorship in that form cannot be regarded as a hardship, or anything more than a disagreeable necessity.

Yet we have been told by another War Correspondent, who went through the Egyptian Campaign of 1882, that owing to the Censorship he was compelled to confine his despatches to fine writing about the stars and the refracted rays of the burning desert. He had a peremptory telegram from his editor to give up stargazing and send home news; and on showing the message to the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley replied with a smile: "That is most

unreasonable of the editor. You could not write about anything so safe as the stars."

It is conceivable that, in certain circumstances, an indiscreet War Correspondent might, in the absence of a censorship, publish matter which in the interest of the army ought not to be disclosed. For instance, he might prematurely disclose some part of the plan of campaign, or reveal details of fortifications and defences, or the weak points and shortcomings in supplies and transport; and the information might reach the enemy in time to enable them to take advantage of it. During the Crimean War Mr. Russell, in his letters to *THE TIMES*, exposed the stupidity and incapacity displayed in the management of the campaign, the disorganisation of the commissariat department, and the terrible sufferings which, as a consequence, the army endured. We now know from Kinglake's *HISTORY OF THE WAR IN THE CRIMEA*, that Lord Raglan wrote to the War Office at home, complaining that the newspaper letters written from his own head-quarters' camp, conveyed the very kind of information of the state and condition of the troops which the enemy most required. Mr. Russell also mentions that, during the siege of Sebastopol,—

Lord Raglan sent the Judge-Advocate O'Maine, who was a personal friend of mine, to my tent to point out that, in a letter which I had sent to *THE TIMES*, information was given to the enemy of a most compromising character,—namely, the use made of a windmill within our lines as a magazine for the storage of gunpowder and projectiles. I replied that my letter was written before the bombardment, the first bombardment of October 17th, 1854, which everyone then in camp expected would have been followed by the immediate fall of Sebastopol, and that when the letter was written I believed that the place would have been in our hands long before the

despatch could have reached London, and certainly long before the paper containing it could have returned to the Crimea.

It is a curious fact that the first idea of a censorship should have emanated from a War Correspondent, for Mr. Russell goes on to relate :

I said that I was sorry that the calculation of the hypothesis was unfounded, and added : "So little am I inclined to take responsibility upon military matters of that kind, that I will in future submit,—or I am quite prepared to send—my letters to head-quarters before they are posted, to be read by Lord Raglan, or any officer he may chose to appoint; but, in that case, I shall be obliged to state to the editor that, in order to avoid doing a mischief to the military situation I have been obliged to take this course." That offer was declined.

Under Sir Colin Campbell in India matters went better. On joining the Army before Cawnpore in February, 1858, Mr. Russell was at once admitted to an interview with the Commander-in-Chief, and found him most cordial and frank. "Now, Mr. Russell," said Sir Colin, "I'll be candid with you. We shall make a compact. You shall know everything that is going on. You shall see all my reports, and get every information that I have myself, on the condition that you do not mention it in camp or let it be known in any way, except in your letters to England." "I accept the condition, sir," was the answer; "and I promise you it shall be faithfully observed." The conditions under which war is waged have, however, changed since then; it must also be added that there are correspondents and correspondents.

In the prospectus of *THE DAILY GRAPHIC* there was published a vivid picture intended as a prophetic illustration of the methods of the War Correspondent of the future. He was

depicted seated in a light wheeled carriage, galloping furiously amid a storm of shot and shell over a battlefield and unwinding, as he proceeded, a telegraphic wire which, connected with the nearest field telegraph-station, brought him into direct communication with the office in London, and thus enabled him to transmit a thrilling account of the dreadful fray from its roaring, sanguinary centre. But that prophetic illustration is destined never to be realised. The invention of deadly weapons of appalling range and precision and the far-reaching extent of a modern battlefield, have rendered that striking picture impossible of realisation. Never again, perhaps, will the War Correspondent bring his readers, as it were, to an eminence overlooking the scene of the conflict, as he was so often successful in doing during the Franco-Prussian War, and show them masses of men mad with the ferocity of war blazing at each other at close range or using the bayonet and clubbed rifle in a hand-to-hand conflict. In the battles of the Boer War the advancing British line was thinly extended along miles of ground, and the bullets came from invisible foes in hills and ravines. General Buller's words, in his memorable despatch announcing his check at Colenso and his inability to relieve Ladysmith in December, 1899, are most remarkable: "I do not think we saw a gun or a Boer all day; but the fire brought to bear on us was very heavy." How is the War Correspondent successfully to grasp the salient incidents of a situation so bewildering?

But of all the tremendous difficulties which the new conditions of warfare have produced to hamper the correspondent in his work, the worst is the muzzle in the hands of the Censor. The public now gets just

such war intelligence as the commanding officer thinks fit to give. If things are going smoothly the censorship is relaxed: the correspondent is permitted to chronicle victories in any terms and at any length he pleases; but in periods of difficulty and stress only the very baldest statements of fact are allowed to go through. Press despatches embody then not what the correspondents want to say, but what the General wishes to have said. At all times the messages of the correspondents are only passed after the last word about an action has been telegraphed home by the officer in command.

The correspondents who went through the Boer War returned home full of indignation of the rigorousness, inconsistency, and capriciousness of the censorship, especially in the latter stages of the campaign when Lord Kitchener was Commander-in-Chief—and with many curious and amusing stories of their experiences. *THE TIMES* representative writes:

On one occasion I had submitted a telegram to a censor at 12 o'clock mid-day, and had had the satisfaction of seeing it "passed" and, as I supposed, on its way to the instrument. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon I received a visit from the censor, who informed me that there was more to be read into my telegram than appeared at first sight, and he did not "quite like it." We read that telegram over together, but could not discover any clause on which to fasten the official veto. What was to be done? The conscientious censor was silent and re-read the telegram. At last a solution of the difficulty was found. Would I consent to the alteration of two words, "no doubt" to "doubtless"? I consented, and the telegram was despatched. Yet, again, a telegram was delayed in order to point out to me, some time after I had left the telegraph office, that, as it stood, my message "would not do." I could not think of any suitable alteration. The censor (a

different one from that just mentioned), however, had a suggestion ready. He objected to the phrase "vigorous prosecution of hostilities"; would I substitute "energetic continuation of the war"? I did. Had the campaign lasted another three months, it would have been incumbent on the War Office to issue a manual entitled *HINTS ON STYLE AND DICTION FOR WAR CORRESPONDENTS*.

It is useless to call in question the right of belligerents to exercise the most stringent control over news transmitted from the seat of war. Nations do not go to war for the sake of the newspapers. Military considerations must be paramount to the desire of the newspapers to keep their readers quickly and fully informed of the progress of a campaign, and despite the complaints and grumbings of the correspondents, officers commanding in the field will take what measures they deem necessary to ensure the secrecy of their plans, and that only their own particular gloss shall appear on the news that is published. Indeed, the Russians and Japanese have both taken measures which tend to the abolition of the War Correspondent altogether. We read in a despatch from Moscow: "The newspaper correspondents accredited to the Russian forces left here for Mukden yesterday. They bind themselves not to divulge news respecting the results of engagements with the enemy or the losses suffered by the Russians or information which may awaken public uneasiness."

THE TIMES made arrangements for the first use of wireless telegraphy in war correspondence. It chartered the British steamer *HAIMUN*, of eighteen hundred tons, on which the De Forest wireless telegraph apparatus was installed, to cruise in the Yellow Sea under the British flag with its Special Correspondent, as a basis of observation and as a mobile telegraph-station, from which news

might be transferred uncensored from the high sea to the receiving station at Wei-hai-Wei on British territory, and thence forwarded by cable, still free of the blue pencil of the Censor, Russian or Japanese, to London. But the Japanese have objected to the cruising of the *HAIMUN* within the parts of the sea in which they have established an effective blockade, and the Russians, with an even greater lack of sympathy for the public, have threatened to treat THE TIMES correspondent as a spy if he should be arrested within the zone of the operations of their fleet.

War Correspondents went out in swarms to Tokio, on the way, as they thought, to the front; but they were left stranded, high and dry in the Japanese capital. They were allowed to learn as little as possible of the progress of the war. Here is an amusing despatch from THE TIMES representative:

General Fukushima, of the General Staff, to-day informed the foreign correspondents here that yesterday a force began to land on the Liautung Peninsula. The correspondents asked the General where and in what strength the landing was being effected. General Fukushima merely smiled, whereupon the correspondents asked again: "Are they landing in the east, west, north, or south?" "Out of the skies, from heaven," replied the General.

The silence of the Russo-Japanese war is really appalling. We are told by the correspondents that at one point the roar of guns are heard in the distance, and that at another columns of smoke are seen ascending. That is all we learn until the bald official despatches arrive from Tokio and St. Petersburg. Does this denote the end of war correspondence by newspaper representatives? "I was at its birth," said Sir William Russell recently. "Now I am at its grave-side."

BUREAUCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

PARODYING a famous resolution passed by the House of Commons a century ago, our local rates have increased, are increasing, and ought to be diminished. Stated in general terms, the amount raised by rates has more than doubled within twenty-five years. Formerly, they amounted to about one-sixth of the rental; now, they are nearly one-half, in most places, while in some they exceed that proportion. The incidence varies with localities, according to the amount of pauperism and to the enterprise, or temerity, of local officials in undertaking constructive works and in embarking on municipal trading. In the London area the annual impost ranges from five shillings and twopence at Surbiton, to six shillings at Wimbledon, seven at Hornsey, eight and fourpence at Enfield, nine and threepence at Leyton, ten and twopence at West Ham, and ten and sixpence at Edmonton, with intervening amounts for other districts. This is the case, notwithstanding the system of equalisation of rates for Poor-Law purposes. The average for the whole of London has grown within a little more than a decade from four and a penny to six and twopence in the pound on the assessment.

In provincial towns the discrepancy is also marked. In Liverpool the rates are six and tenpence, in Portsmouth six and fourpence, in Manchester six and twopence, with a special shilling rate for that white elephant the Ship Canal, which amount is levied on owners of property. The local rates in Derby are five and ninepence, in

Stockport five and fivepence, in Newcastle four and tenpence, and in Barrow-in-Furness four and eightpence. Taking the whole of England and Wales, the average in 1875 was three and fourpence; it is now over five and a penny. Assessments have largely increased. In the metropolis the rateable value has grown in twenty-five years from twenty-one millions to thirty-eight millions, and the amount raised is nearly thirteen millions, against five and a half. In other words, while the former is eighty per cent. more, the amount actually raised has increased one hundred and thirty-five per cent., owing to the enhancement in rateable value. Nor is this all. Payments out of the Exchequer, that is, from the proceeds of Imperial taxes, in aid of local administration, amounted to eleven millions in 1902-3, the date of the last Return. Of this, no less a sum than a million and a half was levied in the form of additional duties on intoxicating liquors.

It must be remembered, also, that, in addition to direct payments in the guise of subsidies or grants-in-aid from the taxes, the public has to bear the heavy and growing burden of rates and taxes levied upon the railways of the United Kingdom. The sum was no less than £4,228,000 in 1902, the date of the last completed Return. The levy has nearly doubled in ten years, though the increase in mileage is comparatively insignificant. Every parish through which a railway passes exacts a heavy toll, and the tendency is to increase the burden upon such corporations, so as to re-

lieve other owners and occupiers of property. Costly litigation is perpetually waged between the companies and the local authorities, especially at quinquennial valuations, over the amount of assessments. One effect of these disputes, and of the heavy imposts for rates, is to lessen the dividends by increasing the fixed charges. Another, and to a much more serious extent, is that the cost of conveying passengers and goods is enhanced. Hence all who use the lines have to suffer. In three cases, where no dividends were paid on the ordinary stock, the companies contributed £280,000 to rates and taxes. Beyond all this, there is the perpetual dead-weight on unproductive capital, arising from the extortions of great landowners, who, according to the late Mr. Samuel Laing, M.P., used their legislative influence to exact fifty millions more than the market value of the land acquired.

The latest summary of Local Taxation Returns for England and Wales was issued in April, 1904, and deals with 28,322 separate local authorities. They received during the year £121,554,966, or nearly ten millions more than in the preceding year. Of this sum, 38·2 per cent. came from rates, 10·3 per cent. from Imperial taxes allocated, 12·6 per cent. from water, gas, electricity and tramway undertakings, and 28·3 from loans. This item is significant and monitory. Sir Samuel Provis, Secretary to the Local Government Board, when giving evidence in June, 1903, before the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons on Municipal Trading, stated that the local debts of England and Wales were £316,704,000. The latest Return, it should be said, gives them as £343,416,582. He added that they were £92,820,000 in 1875, which sum was nearly doubled (£173,207,000) in 1885, and

further expanded to £262,617,000 in 1895. Stated in another form, the local indebtedness rose from £3 18s. 3d. per head in 1875 to £9 16s. 5d. in 1903, just as the average amount of rates levied increased within the same period from 16s. 2d. to £1 8s. 6d. per head. Including Scotland and Ireland, the returns for which are incomplete, the gross total exceeds four hundred millions, or more than half the amount of the National Debt.

In certain cases, however, the local debt per head is largely in excess of the average. In Huddersfield it is £31 10s., in Manchester £30 15s., in Birmingham £23, in Halifax £21 15s., in Blackburn £21, in Nottingham £18 15s., in Stockport £18, in Bolton £17 5s., in Leeds £16 15s., and in Liverpool £16. Some of these places have an unenviable notoriety for the amount of their indebtedness. Manchester leads the van with nearly seventeen millions, followed by Glasgow with twelve and a quarter, by Birmingham with twelve, and by Liverpool with eleven millions. Leeds has seven and a quarter millions, Sheffield five and three-quarters, Bradford five, Nottingham four and a half, Leicester three and a third, Bolton three, and a number of other places range down to a million. One aspect is somewhat ominous for lenders, who, naturally, look to the rates as security. Viewed in relation to assessable value, the debts exceed it six and a half times at Huddersfield; they are more than fivefold at Birmingham, Blackburn, Halifax, Manchester, and Rochdale; fourfold at Bolton, Bradford, Leeds, Nottingham, Oldham, Sheffield, and Stockport; while the debt is twice or thrice the assessable value in many other places.

The growing desire of municipal authorities to embark on trading undertakings is responsible for about

one-half of the aggregate indebtedness in England and Wales. The exact proportion is 48·5 per cent. This subject has been exhaustively discussed of late in the columns of *THE TIMES* and elsewhere, and need not be entered upon here. The other moiety of debt has been incurred for Poor Law purposes, asylums, municipal buildings, highways, street improvements, and sewage works. The points specially demanding attention are that fatal facilities are given for borrowing; that the Local Government Board, instead of being a check upon expenditure, stimulates and enforces it; that perfunctory enquiries are held; and that the time permitted for repayment is unreasonably restricted. Thirty years is the usual limit, which is extended to forty or fifty for certain purposes and in special circumstances. But a much longer period should be allowed in matters of permanent improvement, as in great structural works, and especially in the acquisition of land. The present generation, and even the one succeeding, should bear only its own fair quota towards the cost of what will be an abiding benefit for a century or longer. Owing to the limitations as to the period fixed for loans, about one-sixth of the amount of the rates is absorbed by interest and in repayment of the principal by instalments.

The charge that the Local Government Board fosters and compels outlay for local purposes is a serious one; it is part of a much wider question that demands notice. The modern tendency is for the controlling departments in Whitehall to become more and more bureaucratic and oligarchic. Clauses are foisted into Acts of Parliament by which permanent officialism arrogates legislative as well as executive functions. Provisional orders, rules of procedure,

methods of appointments, scales of remuneration and of pensions, forms of accounts, sanitary and building regulations, and incessant interference with the minutiae of daily routine, have all the force of law. In the War Office and the Admiralty, in the Customs and Inland Revenue Departments, in the Board of Trade and in the Post Office, in the Treasury and in the Board of Education, in the Home Office and in every branch of the Civil Service, illustrations are furnished of the excessive tendency to centralise. The official mind is in danger of being given over to a caste feeling as real and intense as that prevalent in India. An appetite for authority is insatiable; the more grist supplied to the official mill, the more does it want to grind. Information is requested, complaints are forwarded for remarks, interrogatories are administered, petty infractions of Standing Orders are indicated, minutes without end are drafted, schemes are devised, and rules laid down on an endless diversity of subjects. The latest exhibition of this tendency is supplied in the Licensing Bill, introduced into the House of Commons on April 20th, 1904. It is therein provided that, should the compensation awarded by Quarter Sessions for a suppressed licence not be accepted, the Inland Revenue Department shall settle the amount and divide it among the recipients.

This is the general trend of modern officialism. The Board of Trade, for example, which is an impersonal body whose members never meet, takes cognisance of such miscellaneous matters as railways and fisheries, bankruptcy and patents, labour and trade marks, the winding-up of companies and the registry of seamen, standards, and harbours. It employs numerous well-paid inspectors and statistical officers, in

addition to a large clerical staff. Edicts are issued for the construction of light railways, for the regulation of motor-cars, for disputes arising between capital and labour, and for a variety of questions affecting commerce and industry on land and sea. The mercantile world is by no means enamoured with the official system, especially in bankruptcy, where, it is alleged, the delays are interminable and the expenses out of all proportion to the financial results secured for creditors. When derelict limited companies are once suffered to drift into the stagnant pool of officialism, they usually remain there, waterlogged, until there is nothing left to divide. Delinquents on a huge scale are often permitted to escape, but an example is sometimes made of the smaller fry. The scandalous cases of the Balfour, the Hooley, and the Whitaker Wright groups of companies are painfully fresh in public memory.

The Home Office furnishes many illustrations in its dealings with factories and workshops, with explosives and mines, with prisons, reformatories, and industrial schools, and with its other far-reaching powers. One instance must suffice. In 1900 the pay of the Metropolitan Police was increased £70,000 per annum by a stroke of the official pen, without any mention being made of it in Parliament, and of course without any reference to the unfortunate rate-payers who have to find the money. With the exception of the square mile in the limits of the City Corporation, nearly six millions of Londoners are denied any control over the quasi-military force for which they are required to pay. They cannot exercise even the slight measure of authority permitted to a number of petty provincial boroughs. The cost of the Metropolitan Police, number-

ing about fifteen thousand, is now over two millions per annum, and the disbursement rests solely with the officials of the Home Office, acting in the name of the Home Secretary. This is exclusive of £173,539, the cost of the City of London Police. During the last few months a grant of three shillings a week has been made in the same way to constables not living in the numerous and hideous police barracks that have been erected, because of the enhanced rents of small houses in certain parts of London. In like manner, a period of twenty-five years was fixed, virtually by an edict of the Home Office, and embodied in a Statute in 1890, as entitling a constable to claim a pension, which, in the case of the lowest grade, is one pound a week. As the age of men joining is usually from twenty to twenty-five, it follows that some hundreds retire every year, at a time of life when they are in their prime; with the result that they compete on unfair terms for numerous posts with civilians who have no pensions, but who find the money. The total number of police pensioners in the Metropolitan force, according to the Return last year, was 6,612, and the cost was £389,093. The Home Office also keeps a tight check upon the Municipal and County Constabulary, 28,496 in number, by means of the Exchequer contributions, amounting to £1,211,534, out of a total cost of £3,194,562. This is in addition to £375,298 for pensions, nearly half of which comes from the Exchequer grants. These can be withheld by official caprice, and are used to carry out semi-military ideas, and to create a force which ought to be kept strictly and solely under the control of local authorities. Yet the Home Office is, or professes to be, powerless to protect the public in cases of police

tyranny, or to protect constables against vindictive superiors; starting instances of both of which wrongs have recently appeared in the columns of *THE TIMES*.

This inspection craze, like the examination craze, has become a positive nuisance. The country is in danger of being inspected to death. Soon we shall be unable to perform the simplest daily functions without having first obtained an official permission. We are threatened with a return, under other forms, to the Plantagenet times when the price of food, the style of dress, the rates of pay and hours of work, the conditions of manufactures and trades, the forms of belief, and the modes of worship were prescribed by authority, and the least divergence was severely punished. Sir Arthur Helps, himself an official person, but of the wiser sort, has some judicious remarks on this score in the sixth chapter of *THOUGHTS UPON GOVERNMENT*, which the modern spirit of bureaucracy would do well to lay to heart. The concluding sentences may be quoted, after the lapse of thirty-three years:

When you come to look at the thing closely, "central authority" means four or five clever and able men, with a staff of secretaries and clerks, and perhaps with a body of inspectors, who are skilled persons in their several departments of knowledge. But, taken altogether, an office which has perhaps a great name and great authority, is, after all, not a body competent to rule or manage local affairs in detail, and can only give judicious advice, and, in rare cases, judicious aid, to the local authority, which must do the work which properly belongs to it.

If these sagacious and practical counsels had been followed in recent policy, we should have been spared such incidents as the fourteen members of the Shoreditch Borough Council who were surcharged £6,198 last September by the auditor of the

Local Government Board, because, in the exercise of their judgment, and acting, as they honestly believed, in the interests of the ratepayers, they reduced by that sum the amount proposed to be raised by the Financial Committee, and therefore the expenditure was in excess. Nor would the necessary and beneficent work of the London County Council be cramped and hindered, and sometimes frustrated, by unseemly contests with Government departments, and by vexatious and expensive opposition before Parliamentary Committees. During the first fourteen years of its existence the Council had to expend no less than £263,836 in Parliamentary procedure, and various works of public utility have had to be modified, postponed, or abandoned, on account of official indifference or antagonism. In like manner, we have had the notorious Cockerton decision, now known to have been designed as a prelude to the Education Act of 1902. That Act put an end to the anomalous functions of the Vice-President of the Council, and the conflicting authority of the Science and Art Department, and created, in name, a Board of Education, which is the latest apotheosis of permanent officialism and triumph of bureaucracy. Several eminent public servants were pensioned off, as unsuited for the purposes of reaction; and the country beholds the new system, naked and not ashamed.

Besides the two main grievances urged by Nonconformists, of payment without due control, and of the exclusion of teachers from so many schools, there is the grave objection that the Act is being administered in the narrowest bureaucratic spirit. This is always characteristic of class rule, and is the great enemy of democratic government. The carefully considered decisions of School

Boards (recently swept away) as to sites or necessary details of management, have often been contemptuously over-ruled by paid permanent officials, writing in the name of "My Lords," or as "the Education Department." They now sign themselves "the Board of Education," and their treatment of various Welsh County Councils, in capriciously postponing "the appointed day," because of refusals to submit to bureaucratic rule, shows what the country has to expect. Ruthlessly has the Revised Code, annually issued by the Whitehall satraps, over-ridden the opinions of experienced educationists as to the subjects to be taught in the schools, the time to be allotted to each, and every detail of school management. Such treatment disgusted and alienated many sincere friends of education. If School Boards failed to accomplish what was expected, although their genuine and beneficent work cannot be forgotten, it was because the best members became weary of the red-tape of officialism. Practical matters on which they decided, after taking counsel with experienced teachers, were continually condemned or ignored by My Lords on the whim of officials.

An outward and visible sign of the enormous increase of centralisation is the growth of the huge caravanserais of Government offices in Westminster. Millions of money have been swallowed up in bricks and mortar in this way during the last quarter of a century, and there appears to be no limit. The clerical staff displays marvellous elasticity, and the expense of administration and supervision is alarming. The cost of the departments having the control of local affairs is as follows: Local Government Board £221,907, Home Office £156,490, Board of Trade £214,395, Board of Agriculture £113,288, Board of Education £171,634, Charity Commission

£50,312, Lunacy Commission £15,061, Public Works Loan Board £10,698, Woods and Forests £21,860, and Works and Public Buildings £67,200. In Scotland the administrative expenses of the Education Department are £57,982, and of the Local Government Board £15,157. In Ireland the latter body absorbs £62,690, the Education Department £25,097, and the Public Works Board £38,053; making a grand total of a million and a quarter. Without attempting to enter further upon the wide inquiry as to how far other departments of State are obnoxious to the charge of excessive bureaucracy, it will suffice to show that it is exemplified in an astounding degree by the Local Government Board, known before 1871 as the Poor Law Board. Its old functions are perpetuated and greatly extended under the new designation. Local administrators, elected by the ratepayers, are hampered and restrained by Consolidated Orders, which, like the Revised Codes of the Board of Education, and the regulations of the Boards of Trade and of Agriculture and those of the Charity Commissioners, are being perpetually changed, and always in the direction of more control. To a very large extent Guardians and Rural Councils merely have to register and carry into effect the decrees of Whitehall. Everything has to be done after a prescribed pattern.

Nominally, the Local Government Board consists of a President, associated with the Lord President of the Council, the Secretaries of State, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Lord Privy Seal. They never meet as a Board, and never have met. The President, who does not preside, is a mere figurehead who vacates his post with every change of Ministry. The permanent officials set and keep in motion the machinery; and some high-placed personage, speaking in the

name of a verbal abstraction, but armed with absolute powers, dictates to local authorities throughout the kingdom, who are inspected, circumscribed, controlled, audited, counselled, directed, and checked in endless ways. A large corps of inspectors and auditors is maintained, with excellent salaries and a generous allowance for expenses. Their powers are considerable, not to say autocratic, and though an appeal lies to the Board (meaning thereby, it must be reiterated, the permanent officials) the "fellow feeling" which "makes us wondrous kind," cannot fail to operate. Nothing is alleged against them personally. They are honourable gentlemen, zealous and efficient in the public service; but the official mind, in every ruling department, seems to be profoundly convinced that the people of the United Kingdom exist to be regulated, examined, minuted, written upon, added up, and taxed.

The enormous powers of the Local Government Board were enlarged by the County Council Act of 1888, and by the Act of 1899 dividing the metropolis into boroughs. These and similar measures are fenced round, weighted down, and permeated by the controlling action of this phantom Board, and, in a smaller degree, by the Home Office and the Treasury. Power is given to determine boundaries, to fix the number of aldermen and councillors, and to prescribe rules as to elections. Provisional orders of a sweeping character are made, transferring powers under Local Acts, or from other authorities and Government departments. By a single stroke of the official pen nearly fifty additional functions were imposed on the County Councils, to their great bewilderment. In the Act creating those bodies, seventy times over do such phrases occur as: "under the direction of the Local Government Board," or "in such

manner as the Board shall prescribe," or "with the previous consent of the Local Government Board." At every turn its acquiescence or certificate, or that of the Treasury, or of a Secretary of State, is required. In like manner the London Government Act of 1899 is largely operative under similar control, or by an Order in Council, which places supreme authority in the hands of a secret and irresponsible body, who, once appointed, are practically there for life.

Interferences and enforcements on the part of the Local Government Board are seen in a marked degree in the construction of huge and costly workhouses, infirmaries, asylums, and hospitals which are disfiguring the landscape all over the country. The buildings and all the appointments are completed regardless of cost. The money is drawn from the pockets of the ratepayers, who have no voice in the matter. Numerous instances and proofs of this might be cited. A concrete illustration is supplied by the County Borough of Croydon, which has just been compelled, under pressure, to erect at Warlingham a new lunatic asylum, or, as official pedantry designates it, a Mental Hospital. This was opened last July, with much parade and self-glorification, by the local authorities and their officials. The hundred and forty thousand inhabitants of the borough, who have to provide the money, are not so jubilant. The original idea was to spend about £120,000; after some four years of work, with repeated additions and modifications, the amount actually expended up to the present time is £236,159, and it is anticipated that the total cost will be a quarter of a million. The Local Government Board and the Lunacy Commissioners have insisted on the latest whims and crazes, and the ratepayers, like the patient ass in the fable, must bear the burden

as best they can. It is a poor consolation to them to be told that the place is far larger than the local requirements are likely to be for many years to come, and that outside patients can be taken in at a fixed charge. The spot selected is three miles from any railway station, thus adding immensely to the cost of construction, and entailing heavy charges for the future in the conveyance of patients and stores. Among the items of outlay are purchase of land £4,614, erection of buildings, £178,224, electric lighting £7,158, fencing £3,107, water, roads, sewage, and laying out grounds £15,660, cricket and recreation grounds £500, green-houses £428, tell-tale clocks and telephones £1,053, water-softening plant £857, furnishing and farm equipment £14,563, architect's commission £5,250, quantity surveyor's charges £2,587, clerk of the works £1,294, and so forth. It is to be hoped that the ratepayers enjoy having to pay the enormous bills; but Croydon is not singular in this respect.

Some time ago the favourite craze in Whitehall was for huge barrack schools for pauper children, several parishes being grouped for the purpose. One pet show place was Anerley, near the Crystal Palace, where the North Surrey District Schools accommodated about eight hundred children at a cost for each of thirteen shillings a week, including charges of every kind. Thousands of struggling ratepayers have not more than twice or thrice that sum on which to support themselves and their families. Another place of the kind was at Sutton, in Surrey, where nearly two thousand pauper children were cared for in a similar style and at a similar expense. That scheme has now been abandoned, the place sold, at a frightful loss, and the group of the Unions dissolved. But for years the Local

Government Board doggedly refused to make any change, resisted all reform, interposed an inexorable *Non possumus* to every suggestion, would not sanction the boarding-out system, and compelled Guardians to build more schools of the prescribed pattern. After repeated outbreaks of ophthalmia and other diseases, and after the ruinous cost and the worse than inutility of barrack life for children had been demonstrated, the high officials, while tolerating the system of boarding-out, are now favouring village schools on the family system, which threaten to be as costly as the barracks, and to perpetuate the pauper taint by isolating the children in a separate colony.

In some cases Boards of Guardians have wisely erected scattered cottage homes, each under the care of a foster-mother, where twenty or thirty boys and girls of various ages are properly housed and fed, dressed like other children of their class, and sent to the public schools daily. Perhaps this plan is the best, next to boarding-out properly supervised. But the official trend is now in favour of huge village communities, surrounded by a wall or a ring fence, and away from the ordinary channels of life. The result may be shown by a single instance. The Poplar Guardians, acting under the influence from Whitehall, have resolved to spend £144,000 (which probably means a good deal more) on the erection of village school buildings at Hutton, near Shenfield in Essex. These are to take the place of the condemned barrack schools at Forest Gate, and accommodation is to be provided for seven hundred children. Other Boards of Guardians have been incited to adopt a similar course. Such District Schools as remain are costly monuments of official folly. The creation of village communities

for pauper children, under the stimulus of the Whitehall authorities, has involved an initial outlay for land, buildings, and furnishing that ranges from £130 to £280 per head. This involves, of course, the provision of a numerous and expensive staff. The weekly cost, in some cases, is as much as twenty-three shillings per head, inclusive of all charges.

It might be reasonably supposed that local bodies, popularly elected, are best qualified to judge of the requirements of their respective neighbourhoods. So long as certain broad principles and general rules are observed, common-sense suggests that details should be left to the localities. Such, however, is not the practice. The elaborate Consolidated Orders are subject to ceaseless modifications and expansions, and to the glossaries of an interminable correspondence. Boards of Guardians and Urban and Rural Councils are kept in the tightest leading-strings. All their appointments must be submitted for approval and confirmation, and the most trivial regulation has to be framed after the rigid official pattern. Local knowledge, personal character, and collective experience must bend to the ukase issued. No change is permitted in the customary day or hour of meeting, in the dietary scale, in minor points of internal administration, in the maintenance of discipline, in the appointment or dismissal of officers, in salaries, pensions, or allowance, or in a score of other matters, without express permission. Only by such consent can incompetent or recalcitrant officials be got rid of, and even then the tendency is to insist upon a generous gratuity or pension. Officials are encouraged to appeal to the Local Government Board from the Guardians who have to provide the money for any emoluments assigned.

This subject of pay and allowance needs to be seriously considered. Relieving officers, for instance, are not usually drawn from a class of men who would be able to earn from three to four pounds a week in any ordinary pursuit, yet, after receiving such a salary, they can claim so many sixtieths of it, according to their length of service, though much of it may have been in other Unions. The scale is fixed by the Local Government Board, and Guardians have no option. The effect is to create a number of lucrative freeholds for life, although the recipients may be capable of years of further service. Masters and mistresses of workhouses, also, confidently look to the same source when they find it convenient to retire, although they may be in the prime of life, or when their relations with the Guardians who appointed them become strained. Medical officers of workhouses and infirmaries, having been in receipt of no inconsiderable salaries and fees, sometimes with houses, conservatories, gas, coals, and other perquisites, and no rates or taxes, come to regard a retiring allowance as their right, though they do not relinquish private practice.

The remuneration of public vaccinators has become a scandal. Appointed by the Guardians, they are subject to no local control. They can, and do, initiate police-court proceedings without the consent of their nominal masters, and even contrary to their wishes. The scale of payment is fixed by the Local Government Board, and, under recent small-pox panics, and the demand for re-vaccination, it swells to outrageous proportions. The public vaccinator is entitled to one shilling for every child registered or residing in his district who has not died or been vaccinated before the age of four months, or been exempted on medical or legal grounds.

A further fee of half-a-crown is payable by the Guardians for every person vaccinated at the public station, which is increased to five shillings when performed at home. The same scale holds good when scores or hundreds are treated in a day, and the effect is to enormously increase the amounts paid. In Marylebone one doctor recently claimed £2,249 for a single quarter. In Birmingham a doctor's fees rose from £279 to £1,549 last year. In South Shields Union the amount jumped within a year from £110 to £1,080, and it is the same in numberless places throughout the country.

Municipal officers, Poor Law clerks, relieving officers, sanitary inspectors, medical officers of health, day-school teachers and other functionaries, have formed themselves into powerful Trade Unions for mutual defence and for common attack upon the ratepayers' purse. No fewer than 36,870 persons, according to the Census of 1901, are employed by Municipal, Parish, and other Local and County bodies. In addition, a large but unknown number are partly employed. In cases of appeal against unjust assessment or against tyrannical acts on the part of officials, the costs, when the appeal is successful, fall, not upon the official wrong-doers, but upon the rates.

Complaints are often heard that persons of position and intelligence will not undertake the irksome and thankless duties of Poor Law Guardians and Parish Councillors, that many ratepayers are indifferent, and that fussy, incompetent, self-seeking men get themselves elected on such Boards, and on Town and Urban Councils, with an eye to serving their own in-

terests. Nothing but a strong sense of public duty can overcome the dislike felt by many for a task which is unpleasant and difficult in the best of circumstances. Add to these the petty interference with reasonable liberty of action, constant anxiety not to infringe any of the Consolidated or Provisional Orders, occasional conflicts with inspectors (not always gracious or considerate), endless correspondence with head-quarters on minute points of detail, perpetual liability to be surcharged for expenses legitimately incurred, and then no surprise need be felt that persons of self-respect and of conscious ability often decline to subject themselves to such worry and annoyance. A widespread feeling of dissatisfaction prevails throughout the country with the way in which the permanent officials treat the local authorities. It is a grave mistake to confer so much power upon any bureaucracy. Cabinet Ministers and private Members of Parliament in charge of important administrative or social measures, need to possess clear and decided opinions, and to be men of great force of character, in order to curb the tendency to excessive centralisation. Again admitting that many permanent clerks in Government departments are estimable, intelligent, and well-meaning according to their lights, they are not, as a rule, liberal-minded or open to conviction, willing to change or in sympathy with the masses. To hand over local affairs to a bureaucracy is utterly opposed to the spirit of the age, and it substitutes an insidious form of personal rule for representative government "of the people, by the people, for the people."

W. H. S. AUBREY.

